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COMMENTARY

ON THE

Catechism of Rev. W. Faerber

FOR THE

Catholic Parochial Schools of
the United States.

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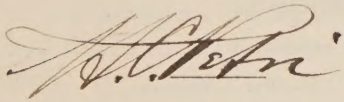

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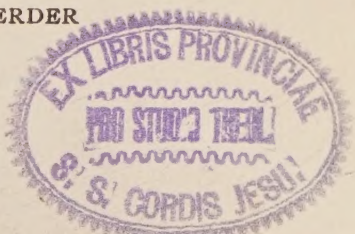

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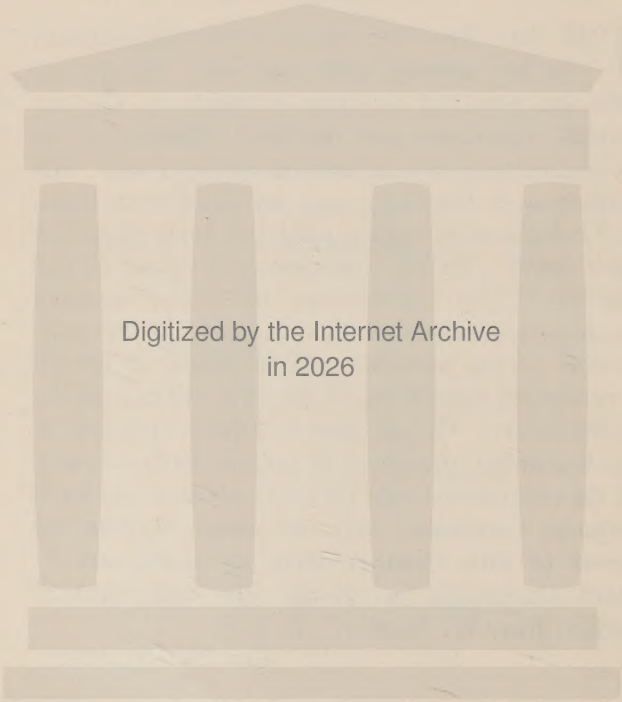
ST. LOUIS, MO.

5760

NOTICE OF THE TRANSLATOR.

THE late Rev. W. Faerber was distinguished for his learning, piety and zeal. He was an able and practical catechist of children. His admirable Catechism and the three volumes of its "Commentary," are an evident proof of this. His Catechism is thorough, easy for children to learn, and calculated to instil a solid and lively piety into their hearts. In his Commentary he gives *in full* the instructions, commenting and explaining each question and answer of the Catechism. At the suggestion of the publisher, the translator undertook a condensed translation of the three volumes of the Commentary. He has, here and there, especially in the beginning, translated in full, or nearly so, some of the instructions, that they may serve as models to incipient Catechists. May our divine Saviour, the Lover of little children, bless our work, and reward abundantly in eternity the late lamented author, Rev. W. Faerber! R. I. P.

THE TRANSLATOR.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PREFACE.

THE priest is called and appointed by God, through his bishop, to announce the word of God, not merely to the adults from the pulpit, but also to the children in school. If the children do not learn and understand the catechism, they will not, when grown up, be able sufficiently to understand and profit by the sermons. If the children do not learn at school to know, love and practise their religion, they will, when they shall have become their own masters, give up hearing the word of God and even assisting at holy Mass and receiving the sacraments. The seed planted too late may, indeed, produce leaves, but will not bring forth fruit to maturity. The fulfilment of the *"Ite et praedicate"* nowhere finds minds more susceptive, more grateful and more fruitful than those of the children that are well instructed in the catechism. The teaching of catechism to children is among the most meritorious of works. "They that instruct many to justice, shall shine as stars for all eternity." (Dan. 12, 3.)

The pastor should consider the teaching and explanation of the catechism as his personal duty; as a most sacred duty, a duty that should not be wholly or chiefly entrusted in the parochial school, in the Sunday-school, or even in academies and colleges, to the teachers, were these even able and pious religious. The children should be taught to consider the priest as the authorized teacher of religion, and not merely as the hearer of their confessions.

The children should not merely learn the catechism by heart, but they should understand it. Hence it behooves the priest to explain it clearly, and to regard its explanation as paramount to the preaching of even important sermons. He should, therefore, prepare himself well for the catechetical instructions, and not rely on his fluency of speech or other merely natural gifts. His language should be simplicity itself, and consist of clear and short sentences. "Melius est," says St. Augustine, "ut nos reprehendant grammatici, quam ut non intelligant populi." The following points are earnestly recommended to all who instruct the children in catechism.

1. Consider it your sacred duty carefully to instruct the children in our holy religion. Regard these words of our divine Saviour as personally addressed to you: "Suffer little children to come unto Me." Next to their parents, and often more than their parents, you are responsible for their salvation.

2. When preparing and about to give them instructions, say to yourself: "I can do nothing more pleasing to God or more meritorious than this."

3. You ought to prepare your instructions on the eve, lest some unforeseen obstacle should prevent you from doing so on the day itself. Never give these instructions unprepared, however great your fluency of speech, etc. The divine blessing rests upon your *labor,* and will be wanting where labor has not preceded.

4. Address a fervent prayer to God before proceeding to give an instruction, saying: "Aperi, Domine, os meum; intellectum illumina, affectum inflamma, ut digne hoc officio perfungi valeam."

5. In your instructions use none but simple

words, simple sentences, which are easily convertible into questions. Avoid compound words and sentences, indirect speech, abstract substantives and abstract reasoning, especially among younger children.

6. Intersperse the instruction with appropriate questions. The answers given will show whether your instruction was practical, whether it was grasped by the children. Be always *calm;* be not impulsive, but ever control your temper, however stupid and dull the children may be. Often the children cannot answer, because the question is obscure or incorrect, or because the explanation was not sufficiently clear and simple. The best remedy is to try a simpler and plainer explanation, to put the question in a different way, or to suggest the answer.

7. Aim at instructing, not merely the smartest, but all the children. Address appropriate questions now and then to the less smart.

8. Be uniformly kind and meek; never show ill humor. If you have been disturbed by some untoward event, compose yourself before the instruction; if you cannot do this entirely, defer the instruction, otherwise the children will be nervous and even afraid, seeing that you are fretful and irritable.

9. Show particular interest and kindness to the weak and the dull and to those who are neglected or ill-treated at home. Children wish to be loved, and the less love is bestowed on them at home, the more grateful they are to the priest and teacher who treats them kindly. A kind word of the priest has often been to such children—until then unmanageable or slothful—a new departure in life. It is very wrong to take a special interest in the smart, the rich, the beautiful. The good priest

will be able to apply these words of the prophet to himself: "Pauperes evangelizantur." Do not fail to ask questions of the poorly talented, but only such as may be easily answered, so as to encourage them and make them more self-confident.

10. Your instructions should be such as to call into action all the faculties of the souls of the children. For children memory is the first and most necessary faculty; it forms the foundation for grasping truth with the intellect and for moving the will. They will never assimilate that which is not impressed in their memory. Be not apt to bestow much praise on those that have a good memory and learn easily, but rather on the less fortunate that use great diligence.

11. Some children know the whole catechism by heart, without, however, understanding it. In explaining it, attend principally to those of mediocre talents, rather than to either extreme—the very bright, the very dull.

12. But the catechist must, above all, seek to move the will of the children. His instructions should penetrate their hearts. His efforts should be directed to inspiring them with a love of their religion, to making them learn how to practise it, how to love God and how to pray. He who succeeds in this, will make all the rest easy for himself and the children.

13. To enable the catechist to attain this desirable end, there is given at the end of each lesson of the catechism an APPLICATION, which ought to be carefully explained, and which the children should commit to memory. It would be well, at times, to give, as a review lesson, a certain number of APPLICATIONS.

14. An appropriate anecdote should be prepared for every instruction. Children are delight-

ed with anecdotes, and often remember nothing else of the instruction; and, even in after life, rely very much on them to remember the instructions. "Stories" make a deeper impression than mere explanations. The catechist would do well to promise a story at the next instruction, if the children know their lesson well. Anecdotes should be related in a lively manner.

15. You should seldom punish during instruction: never do so corporally; you should never show anger; a warning look, a word of admonition, or putting the delinquent into another place, should suffice.

16. Do not proceed in your instruction till the children have understood you and appropriated your explanations to themselves. Do not, at each instruction, propose to go through a certain number of questions, and explain them hurriedly, so as to finish them all within the appointed time. A few questions thoroughly explained and understood, are preferable to very many superficially explained and not well grasped by the children.

17. You will do well frequently to repeat briefly the foregoing lessons, for it is only by dint of frequent repetition that the children will learn and retain the catechism.

18. After each instruction examine your conscience as to how you have given it; whether you could not have done better; try to discover which explanation was beyond the capacity of the children; and any other faults you may have committed.

ADDRESS TO THE CHILDREN.

1. Dear children, I am happy to see you again, and to give you instructions. And why am I happy? Because I love you. I would like to see you all happy, to make you all most happy. But the greatest happiness is only in heaven. Heaven is so beautiful. In heaven the happiness lasts forever. I will do all I can to help you all to go to heaven. I will teach you and show you the way to heaven. O what a joy it will be, when we shall all be in heaven together! I shall then be able to say to God: "Here are those good children that I instructed; they were so diligent, so attentive, so docile at the instructions; they were always so willing to learn the catechism." Is not this true? Will you not always willingly study the catechism and listen to the instructions?

I must also give instructions to the grown people. I do it on Sundays, when I preach in the pulpit. I like to do this; but I prefer to come here to instruct you; and why? Some children do not become old, but die young. They, too, wish to go to heaven. But they must first know the way to heaven. They will learn the way by attending the instructions. And, besides, the grown people would not be able to understand the sermons, if they had not received instructions in the catechism when they were children.

2. Do you know who sent me to give you instructions in catechism? It was God Himself; it was Jesus, the friend of children, who sent me to

instruct you in the catechism. I am a messenger of God. Do you know what is a messenger? If I were to send one of you to tell something to your parents, he would be my messenger; and that which he would have to tell his parents is called a message. An angel once brought a message from God to a pious young virgin. Who knows the name of the angel? the name of the Virgin? Who knows what the message was? Every guardian angel is a messenger of God, and his message is to inspire good thoughts and keep from harm the one he is sent to guard. The twelve apostles were also messengers sent by Jesus Christ to preach to men what they had heard Him preach, to instruct men how to go to heaven. I am not an apostle; I am not an angel; but I am a messenger of God to you; I must do for you what the guardian angel does, what the apostles did for all mankind. I must instruct you to help you to go to heaven.

3. You ought to feel very happy. And why? Because the priest is sent to you by God, as His messenger. He must tell you what God said. What the priest says in the instructions is the word of God; it is the teaching that will bring you to heaven. You should rejoice also, when you think how much Jesus loved children. One day He had traveled a long distance on foot over rough and steep roads; He had also preached much; and in the evening He was very, very tired; He needed rest. It was then that some pious mothers brought Him their little children. But the apostles knew how tired Jesus was, and they told those mothers to go away and bring their children some other time. But Jesus saw this, and said to the apostles:

"Let the children come to Me; do not drive them away, for heaven belongs to all who are like good little children." Then the children came to Jesus and He laid hands on them and blessed them, and surely gave them a nice little instruction. O how happy were the children blessed by Jesus! Would you not like to have been there also? But you need not be jealous of them, for you are almost as greatly favored as they. And why? Because Jesus Christ has told me to bless children in His name; for this also I am His messenger. I will therefore give you now the blessing of Jesus Christ, the friend of children. Kneel down, and when I make the sign of the cross over you, bless yourselves by making also the sign of the cross—*Benedictio Dei omnipotentis Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti descendat super vos et maneat semper. Amen.*— You are now blessed in the name of God; the instruction will now go on well, for all things depend on God's blessing. With His blessing you can do every thing well.

4. You see this book in my hand! What is it! It is a catechism. You all have one. I will give you instructions from it; and you must learn it well. It is a holy book; it contains God's word. All men should learn from it how to become good, how to go to heaven. We should respect and esteem the catechism. When it gets worn out and torn, it should be burnt; you should not let its leaves be scattered about and trodden under foot. It is a necessary book; in fact, it is the most necessary of books. You should study well all your school books, for God wills it. But you should study the catchism more diligently than all the others. If you would know perfectly what all the

other books contain, and did not know the catechism, you would be ignorant, for you would not know what is most necessary for you to know, and would not be able to go to heaven. You see now that the catechism is a holy book, is the most necessary book, for everybody should know it well in order to go to heaven.

5. You should study and learn the catechism, for it is necessary for you to do so. But there is something else still more necessary than this; and this is that I should give you instructions and that you should pay strict attention to all that I shall say to you. Without my instructions you will not be able to understand what the catechism says. The catechism tells of things so holy and so high, that you cannot understand what the words mean. I must then first explain and make clear to you all that the catechism contains, before you can understand it. You see then that the chief thing is the instruction, the explanation of the catechism. A child has learned how to read, and the teacher gives him an arithmetic, and tells him to study it and do all the sums it contains. The child takes the arithmetic, reads and studies it by himself, but understands very little of it, and cannot do the sums. The teacher must explain it and help him to understand it and do the sums. It is the same with the catechism. To learn and understand it well, you must pay attention to my explanations, to my instructions. I shall have to tell you many more things than are in the catechism. The catechism contains only the principal things, which everybody should learn, know and remember all his life. The catechism is a small book; it can be read in one day. Jesus Christ preached and gave instruc-

tions to His apostles day after day for over three years, and often for many hours at a time. If all He did and said had been written down, this place could not contain all the books. So you see the catechism does not contain everything; and yet all that Jesus said and did is good for us to know. I will explain in the instructions all that is good and important for you to know. But to learn it well, you must pay strict attention to all I shall say.

6. There is another thing even more necessary than the catechism and the instructions. Can you guess what it is? It is something most of you already know and do at home and in the church. Is it prayer? Yes; prayer is necessary for everything. Without prayer we can do nothing good. He who does not pray will not go to heaven. A child that prays willingly, is a pious child. Only pious children can fully understand the instructions and learn the catechism thoroughly, for God helps them in this. Always say your prayers, especially in the morning and at night. Often call upon the Blessed Virgin and your guardian angel to help you. Often repeat: "Dear Mother of God, help me to understand the instructions; holy guardian angel, help me to learn the catechism."

INTRODUCTION.

1. Who made us?

God made us.

My dear children, often when you see something new and pleasing, you ask: "What is that? who made it?" The first question in the catechism is: "Who made us?" We are asked this, that we may know what we are, what we should do. The answer is: "God made us." God, who is so great, so powerful, so good, so holy, so beautiful, so lovely; He who made heaven and earth, the stars, the angels, made us also. And why did He make us? Because He loved us. Because He made us, we now live, we are here, we can enjoy life. We should then thank God and praise Him for having made us. Because He made us, we belong to Him. To Him belong also heaven and earth, the sun, the moon, the stars, etc. God is the first word in the first answer of the catechism; this shows that we should begin and do everything in the name of God, to please God.

2. Why did God make us?

God made us that we might serve Him, and thereby gain Heaven.

To gain Heaven = to be happy forever. — To know, to love, to serve God.

If you would ask this question of a pagan, he would not know what to answer. The pagans are to be pitied; they do not know who made them

—nor why they are in the world. They do not know God; they do not love Him. You children are more fortunate than all the pagans, for you know that there is one God, that God made you, that you might serve Him and thereby gain heaven. How can we gain heaven? Who knows? We do not live very long on earth. Some die very young; that is, those who die as babies; others—little boys and girls—die when they have reached your age; others live longer—20, 30, 40, 50 years—and even to 80 or 90 years; but all have to die once and go back to God. Those who serve God faithfully during life, go after death to heaven, where God, who is so good, so beautiful, so lovely, so glorious, reigns on His throne; where the Blessed Virgin and millions of bright angels dwell, sing God's praises and enjoy unspeakable pleasures. Those who go to heaven, feast at God's table, and are forever perfectly joyful and happy; they have all they can wish for; in heaven there is no sickness, no pain, no crying, no suffering, no sorrow, no trouble, no death, but endless joy and happiness. To gain this happiness, we must first know God; if we really know God, as we should, we cannot help loving Him with all our heart; if we really love Him, we shall always strive to please Him, to do all He wishes us to do, and keep His commandments most faithfully.

3. What means: to serve God?

To serve God means: to do the will of God.

Rich people have servants; some have a few, others have many. These servants have each his own work to do; some have to cook, others to care for the garden; some nurse the children, others clean the house, etc. These servants serve their

employers, that is, do the will of their employers. (Illustrate also by clerks in stores.) God has numberless servants—all the angels and saints in heaven, all men on earth; e. g., your parents, yourselves, myself, etc.; the president, the bishop, the Pope! The Blessed Virgin calls herself God's handmaid, that is, God's servant. The servants who do only their own will, receive no pay, but are discharged. Those who do not do God's will, will not gain heaven, but will be punished.—To serve God is to have religion, to put religion into practice.

4. What is the will of God?

It is the will of God

1) that we believe all things which He has revealed,

2) that we keep the commandments,

3) that we receive the sacraments,

4) that we pray.

We must, therefore, 1. believe all things....
Revealed = made known. To serve God = to have *religion.*

We must do all these four things; if we omit even one of these four, though we do the other three, we disobey God, and cannot gain heaven. God makes known to us truths we could never find out, and wishes us to believe them; He tells us what we must do to gain heaven, and we must do it, or else we shall never gain it; He tells us also what means we must use to be able to do what He commands us; and, if we do not use the means He gives us, we shall never be able to do it; and finally, He wishes us to pray, that is, to honor, praise and thank Him, and ask for all that we need in order to be good and to go to heaven. All these four things are necessary to bring us to heaven.

Application. *"But one thing is necessary"* (Luke 10, 42). *"Seek ye therefore first the kingdom of God and His justice"* (Matt. 6, 33). *"What doth it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and suffer the loss of his own soul?"* (Matt. 16, 26).

Who knows which is the "one thing necessary?" —The "one thing necessary" is to do the will of God, and thus save our soul and gain heaven. We need food to live and money to get food; but it is still more necessary to save our soul. If we lose our soul, all is lost, and we shall never enter heaven, but shall be condemned to the endless pains of hell.

What does Jesus Christ mean, when He tells us to "seek first of all the kingdom of God and His justice?" He means that we must seek heaven before everything else by doing God's holy will, by keeping His commandments. Heaven is God's kingdom. To seek God's justice means to do the will of God.

Who said "what doth it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and suffer the loss of his own soul?" Jesus Christ Himself. By these words He tells us it would be of no benefit to us, if we were to gain the whole world; that is, to possess all the money in the world, to enjoy all possible pleasures, to be masters of the whole world, if with all this we were to lose our soul and be condemned to hell after our death. We cannot long enjoy the goods of this world, for sooner or later death will take us away. The torments of hell are everlasting, for out of hell there is no redemption. Dear children, impress these sayings of our Lord deeply in your heart, so that you may never forget them.

PART I.

We must believe all that God has revealed.

The Apostles' Creed.

5. Where do we find the chief truths which God has revealed?

We find the chief truths which God has revealed in the Apostles' Creed.

Chief = most important.

Reveal is to make known something secret, something that people do not know. God knows more than we, more than all men and angels; He knows all things. He knows many things we could never find out. Some of these He revealed, that is, made them known to us. All that God reveals is perfectly true, for God cannot make a mistake, and He cannot deceive us, for He is Truth itself. The chief, or principal truths God has revealed are contained in the Apostles' Creed. Creed comes from the Latin word—*credo*, I believe, and means a short formula of the truths believed.

6. Why is this Creed called the Apostles' Creed?

This Creed is called the Apostles' Creed, because it comes from the Apostles.

The Apostles composed this creed. Jesus Christ had twelve Apostles—men who remained with Him, followed Him everywhere, saw His miracles, heard and listened to His instructions, received from Him the power to work miracles, to preach the Gospel, that is, to preach what they had heard Him

preach. One of them, Judas, was bad; he was a thief, betrayed our Lord and hanged himself. Matthias was chosen in his place. After Jesus Christ had gone up to heaven, and after they had received the Holy Ghost, the Apostles went to preach the Gospel all over the world, one to one country, and another to another country. Before separating for this, they wrote down the principal truths which Jesus Christ had taught, and which they were to preach. All who joined the Church had to learn, believe and recite them at baptism; and these truths were therefore called the "Apostles' Creed." Your sponsors recited it for you at your baptism, for you were then unable to do it yourselves.

7. How many articles does the Apostles' Creed contain?

The Apostles' Creed contains twelve articles.

Article = part, division.

Article means a part. How many parts has your thumb? Your index finger? The two parts make your thumb, the three your index. In like manner the twelve parts make the Apostles' Creed.

8. Say the Apostles' Creed.

Art. 1. I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and earth;

2. and in Jesus Christ His only Son, our Lord:

3. Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary;

4. suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried;

5. He descended into hell; the third day He arose again from the dead;

6. He ascended into Heaven; sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty;
7. from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead;
8. I believe in the Holy Ghost;
9. the Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints;
10. the forgiveness of sins;
11. the resurrection of the body;
12. and life everlasting. Amen.

(The catechist would do well to cross-examine the children on these twelve articles, asking them, for instance — which is the 1st, 5th, etc., article, which article is — I believe in the Holy Ghost, etc.)

The words of the Apostles' Creed are holy; they are a prayer, a profession of faith, and should therefore be devoutly recited. In the early ages of the Church, when the Christians were persecuted, the Apostles' Creed was kept from the pagans, and was made known to converts only before baptism. To know it was the mark of a Christian.

Anecdote.—In the city of Verona, Italy, there was a little boy, called Peter. His parents were heretics, and did not believe in the Apostles' Creed. They sent Peter to a Catholic school, where he learned the Apostles' Creed. He became so fond of it, that he used to recite it very often. One day on his way home from school he met his uncle, who was also a heretic. He asked Peter: "What do you learn at school?" Peter replied: "This is what I learn there." He then recited the Apostles' Creed. But this made his uncle very angry; and he said to Peter: "I will tell your father, and he will

punish you very severely for this." When his father heard of this, he threatened to punish Peter if he ever again recited that creed. But Peter recited it again, and his father beat him unmercifully. But Peter kept on repeating the creed secretly, and remained true to the faith. Later Peter became very holy, entered the Dominican Order, and was soon a famous preacher of the faith. He was sent to preach to the heretics and convert them. He converted very many of them; but those who remained obstinate, were so provoked at this, that they resolved to kill him. One day after he had preached a sermon they met him and cut his head in two with a hatchet; he fell down dying; he tried for the last time to recite the Apostles' Creed; but he could no longer speak. Then he dipped his finger in his own blood, and began to write on the ground the Apostles' Creed, and it was whilst doing so that he died, thus giving up his life for the faith. He is now a great saint in heaven, and the Church celebrates his feast every year on April 29th.

First Article of the Creed.

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth.

Faith.

9. What do you mean when you say "I believe"?

When I say "I believe", I mean that I hold as true, all that God has revealed.

Suppose you were to meet a boy who is accustomed to tell lies, and he would say to you: "Go to such and such a place, and you will see a tree that has silver dollars on it instead of leaves." Would you believe him? No; because he is not

worthy of credit, for he is accustomed to tell lies, and tries to deceive people. But if your father were to say to you: "When I was a little boy I saw thousands and thousands of buffaloes on the plains in the West, where there are now large cities." Would you believe this? Yes; because your father is truthful and would not try to deceive you; he is therefore worthy of credit. Now if God were to come down from heaven, and tell you many things about heaven and its beauty and glory, and also what you must do to go to heaven; you would surely believe it; would you not? Why? Because all that God says is true, for God knows all things and is Holiness and Truth itself. In His goodness toward us, He makes known, that is, reveals to us things secret, which we could never discover ourselves.

10. What has God revealed?

God has revealed all that we must know and do to gain Heaven.

God created us that we might share His happiness in heaven by serving Him on earth. But to serve God we must do His will. But we cannot do His will, if we do not know it. God has, therefore, made known, revealed His will to us, telling us what we must know, believe and do to gain heaven. God first revealed this to Adam and Eve; they were to tell it to their children, and these to their own children. Next God spoke to Noe, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the patriarchs, the first fathers of families in olden times; then to the prophets, men enlightened by God to make known future and secret things; finally, the Son of God, Jesus Christ, came down from heaven, became man, preached the Gospel, chose and sent the apostles to teach all men what they should believe and do to be saved, to gain heaven.

11. Who teaches us what God has revealed?

The Catholic Church teaches us what God has revealed.

The apostles died over 1800 years ago. Who teaches us? The priests. Who teaches and sends the priests? The bishops. Who teaches and sends the bishops? Our Holy Father, the Pope. St. Peter was the first Pope; the apostles were the first bishops. They in their turn taught, ordained and sent other bishops and priests to teach mankind. All these teachers and those they teach are called the Church—the Catholic Church—a great society for the whole world, for all men until the end of the world—founded by Jesus Christ nearly 1900 years ago.

12. Whence does the Catholic Church obtain all that she teaches?

The Catholic Church obtains all that she teaches from Holy Scripture and Tradition.

The Pope, the bishops and the priests do not and may not teach what they fancy, but only what Jesus Christ Himself taught when He was on earth. How do they know what Jesus Christ taught? When you wish to find out something you do not know (v. g., when was the battle of New Orleans fought), you look into and consult your books. Thus also do the Pope, the bishops and the priests. We have many books for this; for instance, the Holy Bible, holy books which God inspired men to write, and which contain His word. They have also the books of holy and learned men of former times, and the holy and learned men now living; this is called Tradition, and contains the teachings handed down in the Church from the beginning.

13. What does Holy Scripture contain?

Holy Scripture contains those revealed truths which were written by men chosen and inspired by the Holy Ghost.

Holy Scripture = Bible. Word of God. The *Old* and the *New Testament.*

1. Holy Scripture, or the Bible, is a large book containing those true things which God has made known. God chose certain men and inspired them to write the things He wished to reveal to men. They were inspired by the Holy Ghost to do this, that is, the Holy Ghost whispered, not into their ears, but into their minds those things which He wished them to write. One of these was Moses, whom He inspired to write the first five books of the Bible. The Bible is composed of 72 inspired books collected together into one volume.

2. This book is called Holy Scripture, because it is a writing that comes from God. It is also called the Word of God, because God spoke or inspired all that it contains. It is called Holy Bible, from a Greek word that means "book." Bible History means the histories contained in the Bible.

3. We should esteem Holy Scripture highly, and treat it as something very holy. The priest is obliged to read a certain portion of it daily in the Divine Office, at Holy Mass in the Missal, or Mass-book. A part of the Mass is called the Gospel, for it contains what Jesus Christ did, said and taught. Out of reverence for it, the priest kisses the book after reading the Gospel.

4. Holy Scripture is divided into two principal parts—the Old Testament and the New Testament. Before dying the father makes his will, or testament; in it he tells what he gives to each of his children. In like manner, God in Holy Scripture

tells us, His children, that He gives us in this life His blessing and the means of salvation, and in the next life the joys of heaven. The Old Testament contains what God said and did for men from the beginning of the world till the coming of Jesus Christ. The New Testament contains the principal things Jesus Christ and the apostles did and taught. The Old was written mostly in Hebrew, and the New in Greek. About 1500 years ago St. Jerome translated both into Latin, and the Church uses his translation—called the Vulgate.

5. A person may go to heaven without ever reading the Bible, for neither God nor the Church has ever commanded people to read it. Since the Bible is hard to understand, reading the Bible, as experience proves, may do harm to many, who would misunderstand it. We are allowed to keep and read the genuine Bible—that is, the Bible correctly translated, and having notes explaining the difficult passages. The Protestant Bible is not correctly translated; it is a counterfeit Bible, for it is full of errors, and is apt to lead people astray from the truth. The genuine, or Catholic Bible is easily known by its bearing the approval of the Pope or of some Catholic bishop, and having notes explaining the difficult passages.

The Catholic Church alone has the right to explain the Bible, for she alone is authorized and inspired by the Holy Ghost.

Which are the books of Holy Scripture?

The *Old Testament* consists of 21 Historical, 7 Moral, and 17 Prophetical Books. The *Historical Books* are: 5 Books of Moses, the Book of Josue, of Judges, Ruth, 4 Books of Kings, 2 of Chronicles, the Book of Esdras, Nehemias, Tobias, Judith, Esther, 2 Books of the Machabees. — The *Moral Books* are: The Book of Job, the Psalms, the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Canticle of Canticles, the Book of Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus. — The

Prophetical Books are: *Isaias, Jeremias,* Baruch, *Ezechiel, Daniel,* Osee, Joel, Amos, Abdias, Jonas, Micheas, Nahum, Habacuc, Sophonias, Aggeus, Zacharias and Malachias.

The *New Testament* consists of 27 Books in the following order: the *4 Gospels* according to St. Matthew, St. Mark, St. Luke, and St. John; the *Acts of the Apostles; 14 Epistles of St. Paul,* namely 1 to the Romans, 2 to the Corinthians, 1 to the Galatians, 1 to the Ephesians, 1 to the Philippians, 1 to the Colossians, 2 to the Thessalonians, 2 to Timothy, 1 to Titus, 1 to Philemon, 1 to the Hebrews; *7 Epistles of the other Apostles,* namely 1 of St. James, 2 of St. Peter, 3 of St. John, 1 of St. Jude; the *Apocalypse* of St. John.

The historical books contain histories and what God has done for us. The moral books teach good morals, and make known what God is, what He does for us and what we should do to please Him. The prophetical books foretell future events, and made known, hundreds of years beforehand, when the Redeemer would come, where and of what family He was to be born, what He was to do and to suffer just as it afterward really happened. There are four great prophets, Isaias, Jeremias, Ezechiel and Daniel; and 12 minor prophets.

The most important historical books of the Old Testament are the five books of Moses, containing an account of the creation, of the fall of our first parents, the deluge, the vocation of Abraham, the history of Joseph in Egypt, etc., etc. Among the moral books the book of Psalms—150 in number—is the chief; most of the psalms were written by King David, called the Royal Prophet.

The most important books of the New Testament are the Gospels and the Epistles. Gospel—formerly called Evangel—means joyful tidings. The four Gospels were written respectively, by St. Matthew, St. Mark, St. Luke, and St. John, the beloved disciple of Jesus. When the Gospel—that is, a part of one of these books—is read at Mass, all stand up out of reverence.

Epistle means a letter. The epistles were written by some of the apostles, some to certain Christian congregations, and others to certain individuals. At that part of the Mass called the Epistle, a certain portion of them or of some moral book of the Old Testament is read by the priest.

14. What does Tradition contain?

Tradition contains all revealed truths, even those which are not found in Holy Scripture.

"Many other signs also did Jesus in the sight of His disciples, which are not written in this book" (John 20, 30). *"Hold the traditions which you have learned, whether by word, or by our epistle"* (II. Thess. 2, 14).

Tradition means the teaching or truths transmitted to us by word of mouth.

The revealed truths were handed down to us by the preaching of the Apostles and their successors. Many of them were written down by the Fathers and the Doctors of the Church (Ambrose, Augustine, Jerome, Gregory).

Tradition means the teachings or truths transmitted to us by word of mouth. Jesus Christ instructed His apostles for three years; He sent them to instruct the whole world as He had instructed them. They instructed others as He had instructed them, and these others instructed others again, and thus it has been continued till our times. Inspired by the Holy Ghost, the apostles wrote some of the truths they had heard Jesus Christ preach, but not all, for St. John says that the world could not contain all the books, if everything Jesus did and said were written down. St. Paul also tells the Christians: "Brethren, stand firm; and hold the traditions which you have learned, whether by word or by our epistle" (2 Thess. 2, 14). He says in another epistle that he has many more things to say, but that he will say them, when he will come to them. What the apostles preached and wrote is tradition; what they wrote is written tradition;

what they merely preached is oral tradition. Both of these traditions make up the faith taught by Jesus Christ. Later on holy and learned men wrote down the truths preached by the apostles. The more ancient are called the Fathers of the Church; the more learned ones and the later ones are called Doctors of the Church. Their books are always consulted to know what the Church teaches and what we must believe.

15. Is faith necessary to salvation?

Faith is necessary to salvation.

"Without faith it is impossible to please God" (Hebr. 11, 6). *"He that believeth not, shall be condemned"* (Mark, 16, 16).

1. Just as food is necessary to feed the hungry, feet, necessary to walk, eyes to see, so faith is necessary to go to heaven.

2. There is no salvation for those who have no faith. Our Lord says expressly: "He that believeth not shall be condemned;" and St. Paul says: "Without faith it is impossible to please God." He who is not pleasing to God, who is not His friend, cannot enter heaven.

3. Faith is the road to heaven. If we wish to go somewhere, we must take the road that leads to that place. God, who knows full well the road to heaven, tells us that faith is the right road to it. Faith is like a shining light; it gives us light, and enables us to see where we are going. If you had to pass through a dark forest, full of holes, rough stones, swamps and fallen trees, and there would be only one safe, but very narrow path, what would you need to get through safely? A bright lantern to find your way! Faith is the bright lantern that will show us the way to heaven through numberless difficulties and dangers.

Application. Thank God for the gift of faith. God gave you the grace to believe. He infused faith into your soul at Baptism. Learn well whatever you must believe. Be diligent in studying your Catechism and be attentive at instructions.

We can never thank God enough for the gift of faith. God gave us eyes to see, feet to walk, and faith to believe the truths He has revealed to us. When God gave us faith at baptism, we could not yet make use of it, just as we could not then use our feet to walk, or our tongue to speak. But now we can use or practise our faith; let us then thank God for it, by learning in our catechism what faith teaches us. Faith is a far greater gift than if God had given us all the money, honors and pleasures in the world. We should value it more than anything else, and be willing even to suffer and die rather than lose it or give it up.

Parable.—A poor man had to cross a large sandy desert to reach his destination—a most beautiful city. As he could get nothing to eat or drink on the way, he took along in a large basket plenty of bread and some jugs of water. The basket was very heavy and he could not go very fast at first; but he had enough to eat and drink till he reached the city, and there he was given a fine house to live in and all his wants were abundantly supplied. There was another man who also wished to go to that city. As he was rich, he took along only a bag full of gold and silver and fine jewels. He would not believe those who told him that he could have no use for all this wealth on the way, and that he should take enough provisions along to last him till he would reach the city, for all his money could not procure him any in the large desert. He did not proceed far the first day, for his load of money was too great, and he had nothing to eat and drink. The second day was worse, for he could hardly

walk; he was so weak and tired. On the third day he soon could go no farther, but laid down in the desert, and remained in the same place till he died of thirst and starvation, with his bag full of money at his side.

Children, this is only a parable. The city is heaven, where God has prepared a beautiful dwelling for each one. The man who took food along on his journey, means the man who has faith and practises it; he will surely reach heaven. The man who took a load of money but nothing to eat or drink on the way, means the man who has no faith, and will never reach heaven. So you see that you need faith more than money, etc., if you wish to go to heaven.

God.

16. What is God?

God is the supreme and most perfect Spirit from Whom all good things come.

Supreme = highest, greatest of all.
A spirit has understanding and free will, but no body.
God is infinite, incomprehensible. His *perfections* are without measure and number.

1. No man, no angel can tell perfectly what God is. He is so great, so good, so glorious, far more than we can ever know or think. A king one day said to Simonides, a wise man who lived over 2000 years ago: "Tell me, what God is." Simonides answered: "Give me some days to think over this." Some days later he came to the king and said: "Give me more time yet to think it over." The king agreed. Later on he returned several times to the king, and asked for more time to think over that question. At last the king became impatient, and said: "Simonides, why do you not give some answer to my question?" But

he replied: "The longer I think over what God is, the less I can understand and express it." Yes, children, God is so great, that no one can understand what He is, even if he studied over it hundreds of years. The most we can understand about God is contained in the answer given in the catechism.

2. Our soul is a spirit, the angels are spirits. We cannot see a spirit with our eyes, for a spirit has no size, no color, no head, no hands and feet, like our bodies. A spirit has life. Our soul has life and makes our body live; when the soul leaves the body, the body is dead. A spirit has reason, can think, know and understand. A spirit has free will; it can will as it pleases, what it pleases. No one can compel a spirit to act against its will. A spirit is far more noble than a body. God is the greatest and the purest spirit. Our soul is not a pure spirit, for it is united to our body and dwells in it. An angel is a pure spirit, for it has no body, and is not made to dwell in a body; but it is not the greatest, purest or most perfect spirit, for it cannot know or do all things and depends entirely on God; but God is the greatest, purest and most perfect spirit, for He knows and can do all things; He does not depend on anything, but all things depend on Him.

3. Imagine a large tower, surmounted by a cross, divided into stories, and reaching from the earth to the highest of the stars; in the lowest story are the children, in the next above are the parents; above, always higher and higher, are the priests, bishops, the Pope, the patriarchs, the prophets, the martyrs, the virgins, the apostles, the nine choirs of the angels, and on top of the cross is the Blessed Virgin. And where would God be? He would be millions and millions of times higher and

farther off from us than the Blessed Virgin. No one is or can be above God or even equal Him.

4. God is the most perfect spirit. He is the most powerful, the most holy, the best, the wisest, the most beautiful of beings. This world is beautiful; (give examples). Much more beautiful still is the soul in the state of grace; far more beautiful still are the saints and angels in heaven; incomparably more beautiful is the Blessed Virgin, Mother of God. But millions and millions of times more beautiful still is God. In heaven we shall see so much beauty in God, that it will make us most happy, and we shall be forever looking at it and enjoying it without ever being able to see it all. His beauty cannot be measured or conceived; it is infinite, that is, boundless.

5. God is an ocean of perfection. How large the ocean is! We can travel for days on the ocean in the fastest steamships without seeing land; the ocean is in many places so deep, that it cannot be sounded even with lines that are miles long. The ocean is made up of single drops of water. Who can count them all? It would take thousands and thousands of years to do so! But even if we would spend millions and millions of years in counting the perfections of God, we could never succeed.

6. Everything good comes from God. He is the source of all good. A stream comes and flows from a spring, a fountain; in like manner, all that is good in us, all the good we have, flows from God, the source of all good.

7. We cannot see God with our eyes, or perceive Him with any of our senses, for He is a spirit, and has not a body or shape as we have. In like manner, we cannot see our soul, or an angel. We cannot make a real picture of what we cannot see; we cannot then make a real picture of God.

And yet each one of you, I think, has a picture of Him at home. What is it? The crucifix. It represents Jesus Christ, God the Son, who became man and died on the cross for us. We can see Him, because He took a body like ours. The Holy Ghost is pictured as a dove or a tongue of fire, because He appeared in these forms on certain occasions. God the Father is represented as a venerable old man, to show His eternity.

17. Is God eternal?

God is eternal: for He is always, He is without beginning and without end.

"Before the mountains were made, or the earth and the world were formed, from eternity and to eternity Thou art, O God" (Ps. 89, 2).

As God is eternal, He is also *unchangeable.*

1. God had no beginning. How old are you? (8 or 10 years old.) Where were you 11 or 12 years ago? Your father is older than you; but where was he 100 years ago? There are houses, trees, 700, 800, 1,000 years old; but where were they 10,000 years ago? The mountains are still older. But the world and everything in it once had a beginning. Not so with God; God has always existed.

2. God has no end. Everything in the world will die, will have an end; sooner or later it will be no more; after a certain space of time all will perish. Look at the moon; astronomers say it is a world dying.

3. There is in God no change, no past, no future. To Him everything is present. He is eternal.

4. God is always the same. Everything in the world changes; the sun rises in the morning, sets in the evening; the seasons succeed one another;

plants grow and decay; we ourselves change every day. God does not change. We may, however, say: "When I was baptized, God loved me, because I then was made pure, holy, and became His friend, His child. But when I fell into mortal sin, God ceased to love me and was irritated against me." Did God change? No; but you changed from good to bad. On Sunday when you are well dressed, about to go to church, you look into the mirror, and see a nice boy (or a nice girl); the next day after playing in the muddy street, you look again into the same mirror, and you see something quite different. Has the mirror changed? No; but you have!

5. God is goodness itself and infinitely happy. He wishes to give us all a share in His eternity, in His infinite happiness in heaven. On earth all pleasures are short; you like to eat, but cannot be always eating; you are fond of play, but soon get tired of the same play, and must change your amusements. But in heaven we shall have such pleasures, that we shall never grow tired of them, and shall always feel perfectly happy. But you cannot take to heaven your money, your fine clothes, your playthings, but only your good works. The more good works you perform during life, the more beautiful and happy you will be in heaven.

18. Is God everywhere?

God is everywhere: for He is in Heaven, on earth and in all places.

"Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy face? If I ascend up into Heaven, Thou art there; if I descend into hell, Thou art there" (Ps. 138, 7, 8). *"Do not I fill Heaven and earth, saith the Lord"* (Jer. 23, 24).

1. You cannot be in two places at the same time; you cannot be playing out in the yard and be at the same time in here listening to the instruction. God is in every place at the same time. A bishop once said to a little boy: "If you tell me where God is, I will give you an orange." The boy who knew the catechism, replied: "I will give you two oranges if you can tell me where God is not." God is in heaven and on earth. Is He also in hell? Yes, He is there, but does not suffer. He there punishes the wicked. Since God is a pure spirit, and has no shape, no parts, He is whole and entire in every place. Like our soul; it is whole and entire in our whole body, and also in every part of our body.

2. If we often remember that God is everywhere, we shall keep from doing anything sinful. Would you commit sin, if your parents, your teacher, the priest were always at your side? You can never be alone; there are always three present: yourself, God, and your guardian angel. You can never hide yourself from God.

3. Some children are greatly afraid to be alone in the dark, especially at night. They should remember that God is everywhere, and watches over them, and will protect them against danger.

4. Since God is everywhere, we can always speak to Him, wherever we may be. God is especially in the church, for it is His house. One day a poor beggar met a rich man in the street and begged for an alms. The rich man took out his purse, and found in it only two nickels; he gave them to the beggar, saying: "If you want more, come to my house and get it." The beggar went to the rich man's house, and received enough money to procure new clothes, besides enough food and provisions for a long time. In like manner, when we

go to Church to pray, and especially to hear Mass, God gives us many more graces than if we remained at home to pray. Good Christians, when passing by a church, usually enter it to pray for a few moments at least.

19. Does God know all things?

God knows all things: for He knows what has been, what is now, and what shall be or may be.

"Neither is there any creature invisible in His sight" (Heb. 4, 13). *"The searcher of hearts and reins is God"* (Ps. 7, 10). *"Thy Father who seeth in secret, will repay thee"* (Matt. 6, 4.)

1. Although you are young, you know many things. The older you grow, the more you will know. Those who know much more than other people are called learned; and no matter how much the most learned know, there are many more things which they do not know. The lowest angel knows much more than the most learned men. The highest angel knows more than all the others. The Blessed Virgin knows still more; but God alone knows all things.

2. God knows all that is past, all that is now, and all that ever will be. He knows by name all men that have ever been or ever will be, all they ever thought, said or did, and all that they ever will think, say or do. There are now 1,500,000,000 men on earth, and He knows them all, and all their thoughts, words and actions. He knows all the animals, plants, grains of sand, drops of water that ever have been or will be in the world. He knows not only all that will really happen, but all that could possibly happen; for instance, a baby dies; God knows all that that child would have thought, said or done, if it would have lived to be a hundred years old or more.

3. Let us often reflect that God knows all things, even our most secret and hidden thoughts. If you were aware that some persons could know all your thoughts, how carefully you would watch over them. But God knows them all, and will surely reward your good thoughts and punish your evil thoughts.

20. Is God all-wise?

God is all-wise: for He knows how to dispose all things in the best way.

Dispose = arrange.

"Thou hast made all things in wisdom" (Ps. 103, 24). *"Commit thy way to the Lord, and trust in Him: and He will do it"* (Ps. 36, 5).

Example: Joseph exalted, Moses saved. — The four seasons. Day and night. The eye, the hand.

1. To be all-wise is more than to know all things. He is wise who is smart, clever, able and prudent, who can do all in the right and best way. You know what a clock is, a watch. Somebody, for instance, after taking a watch apart, tells you to put it together again. But you say: "I cannot do it; I do not know how the parts fit together." But a watchmaker knows; also other smart men. A watchmaker is wise in making and repairing watches, a carpenter in woodwork, a seamstress in making dresses. But nobody is wise in everything. God alone is wise in all things. David thus addresses God: "Thou hast made all things in wisdom" (Ps. 103, 24). We should pray God to direct us in all we do, that we may do it wisely.

2. God in His wisdom knows how to draw good out of evil and to attain His end in spite of the malice of man. We can see this clearly in the history of Joseph who was sold as a slave out of jealousy by his brothers; who afterward was cast

into prison on a false accusation, and became later the prime minister of Egypt and saved Egypt and especially his father and his brothers from starving during a seven years' famine. We can see it also in the history of Moses whom his mother, to save him from being drowned, placed in a basket in the river Nile; the wicked king's daughter found him, adopted and educated him, and thus he became later the means of saving his people and bringing them to the Promised Land, as we learn from Bible History.

3. See also how wisely God arranges things on earth. Spring is the time for sowing seed into the ground and for the seed to spring up and grow; the heat of summer ripens the fruit, and in autumn the harvest takes place, and the ground rests during the winter, so as to be ready again for planting in the spring. (Illustrate further God's wisdom in the succession of day and night; in the distance of the earth from the sun—neither too near, nor too far off.) What we need most God gives us plentifully and almost everywhere—grass, trees, fruits, vegetables, water, iron. What we do not need so much, is not so plentiful—gold, precious stones, flowers. See God's wisdom in making our eyes: clear, moist eyelids move to protect them, the eye-lashes keep away insects and dust.

4. God, in His boundless wisdom, directs all in our life for the best. The sick and the poor should think: "God wills that I be sick—poor; He knows what is best for me. Knowing this, I am satisfied, although I do not understand it." If a savage would see a man writing a letter, he would say: "What a fool that man is!" for he would not understand the writing. But the man writing is wise, and it is the savage that is foolish, or rather ignorant. If a deaf man would see for the first time

a musician playing an instrument of music, v. g., a violin, he would misjudge the musician, because he knows nothing about music or sound. In regard to God's ways and designs over us in sending us sufferings and trials, we are ignorant, and therefore should not find fault with Him, but believe it is all for the best.

Anecdote.—A certain man used to say: "All that God does and sends me is good for me." One day he intended to start in a certain vessel on a voyage, but he was prevented from doing so, because on the way he fell down and broke his leg. A friend asked him: "Was it good for you that you fell and broke your leg?" "Yes," he replied, "all that God sends me is good, even if I do not know why." The ship sailed without him, but was soon wrecked and lost in a great storm, and all on board perished. Thus was this man's life saved by the apparent misfortune that befell him.

21. Is God almighty?

God is almighty: for He can do everything He wills.

"No word shall be impossible with God" (Luke 1, 37). God said: Be it made, and it was made.

1. He who is mighty can do many and great things; he who is almighty can do all things. Men can do some things, but not as God does them. To make a thing, man needs materials, tools and time; for instance, what does a carpenter need to make a table? What does a cook need to prepare a meal? God needs no material, no tools, no time to make things; all He needs is to say: "I will this thing," and at once it is there. Thus God made the earth, and all on it, and the sun, moon and stars.

How mighty God is! The most wealthy, pow-

erful and wise man cannot make even one blade of grass, one little plant. But God has covered the whole earth with them by a single act of His will. The earth is a large ball rolling around the sun; the sun is 1,000,000 times larger than the earth and is 93,000,000 miles distant from the earth. If you walked thirty miles a day, it would take you 12,000 years to reach the sun. There are millions of stars in the heavens, and they are millions of times further off from us than the sun! and are all moving about in space; each star is a sun like ours. All these God made by an act of His will! God has also made many wonderfully small things; for instance, the microscope tells us that in a single drop of water there are numberless little animals swimming about. A piece of limestone, no larger than your little finger, is made up of shells of thousands of little animals. God has made them all by a single word only.

2. God can do all things. By a single word He can make millions of times more worlds, suns and stars, and smaller animals, than there are already. When the Son of God was on earth, He performed miracles, extraordinary things. Among others, He stopped at once a fearful storm on the lake by merely saying: "Peace, be still." He raised to life Lazarus, who was in the tomb, who had been dead four days and whose body was already corrupting, by merely saying: "Lazarus, come forth." And Lazarus at once came alive out of the tomb. To God nothing is impossible.

3. You should in all things put your trust in God. Your father can do many things for you, but he cannot always cure you when you are sick, or, if he is poor, give you fine and costly clothes. But God can cure you, when you are sick; and He will do so, if you pray to Him to cure you,

and if a cure will benefit your soul. He can give your father means to give you fine clothes. When you find your lessons difficult, pray to God to help you to learn them, and He will do so.

22. Is God holy?

God is holy: for He loves and wills only what is good, and hates what is evil.

"Be ye holy, because I, the Lord your God, am holy" (Lev. 19, 2). The Angels' eternal song of praise in Heaven; *"Holy, holy, holy, (is) the Lord God of hosts"* (Is. 6, 3).

1. God is goodness itself; He loves all that is good. He hates what is bad or evil; He does not wish men to be wicked. All that is contrary or opposed to God's will is bad, evil, sinful, God loves the good, the holy; they alone can enter heaven. He does not love the wicked; they cannot go to heaven, for nothing defiled can enter it. The angels rejoice at God's holiness, and constantly sing, as the priest says at Mass, these words: "Holy, holy, holy, the Lord God of hosts."

2. God wills that all men be holy; that is, that they should do good and hate and avoid sin—God does not consider if a man be rich, etc., but only if he do good and shun evil. What He commands is good, and what He forbids is evil. He makes known His will to us in the ten commandments. Those who keep them are good and holy, and those who break any one of them, are wicked. If you do not pray, if you disobey your parents, if you curse, quarrel, injure your neighbor, you are not good, but wicked.

There have been many holy persons on earth, who are now in heaven; but none so holy as God. Their holiness is like a candle light, and God's is like the light of the sun. God is infinitely holy.

You can all become holy, if you are good. If you have been bad, you can become good. You should say, thinking of your patron saint: "My patron saint became holy, and I also can become holy, if I try as he did, by avoiding sin and keeping the commandments of God." Queen Blanche had a son, who became a great saint. When he was little, she would say to him: "Dear Louis, I love you very, very much; but I would rather see you die, than that you should ever commit a mortal sin." Little Louis remembered these words so well, that he never committed a mortal sin. St. Edmund of Canterbury used to say: "I would rather cast myself into the fire, than do anything bad." He was right. We should imitate him.

23. Is God just?

God is just: for He gives to every one what he deserves: He rewards the good and punishes the wicked.

"Who...judgeth without respect of persons, judgeth according to every one's work" (I. Peter 1, 17). *"By what things a man sinneth, by the same also he is tormented"* (Wis. 11, 17).

Full retribution will be made only in eternity.

1. Because God is holy, He is also just. Because He loves what is good, He rewards it also. Because He hates sin, He punishes it. Very few persons would be good, if there were no reward in heaven for the good. Very few would keep out of mortal sin, if there were no punishment in hell for the wicked. If you disobey your parents, they will punish you, and God also will punish you. If you obey them you will please them, and please God also, and He will reward you.

2. God gives to every one all that he deserves, for He has promised it. He rewards more those

who are better than others; and He punishes more severely the more wicked.

3. You may deceive your parents, so that they may never find out how bad you are; and they cannot always punish you as you deserve. God, however, who knows and sees all things, will punish every wicked thing we do. Your parents cannot always reward you, for they may not know how good you are, or may not have the means to reward you. But God knows all and is able to reward us as much as we deserve.

4. God does not usually reward or punish immediately, but He will most surely fully reward the good in heaven and punish the wicked in hell.

5. Some persons murmur against God, saying that He allows the good to suffer and the wicked to prosper, and that He is, therefore, not just. Such murmurs are very sinful. The good always have some little faults, and God sends them sufferings to do penance for them in this life, to spare them a long purgatory after death; and He will reward them in heaven for their sufferings, if they are patient. The wicked have some good qualities and perform some good actions, that deserve to be rewarded; God rewards them on earth, since, on account of their wickedness, they cannot go to heaven.

6. God treats every one according to his good or bad deeds. He punished the rebel angels by casting them into hell; He expelled Adam and Eve out of the earthly paradise for their disobedience; He drowned the world by the deluge, because all men were very wicked, but He saved the good—Noe and his family. He drowned the Egyptians in the Red Sea, as a just punishment for their drowning all the infant boys of the Israelites. Also those uncharitable people of Bethle-

hem who refused to receive Mary and Joseph into their houses, were justly punished by the murder of their little boys. The rich man who drank fine wines and feasted splendidly and showed no charity to the poor but pious Lazarus, who was sick, is tormented in hell by a terrible thirst, and asks in vain for a drop of water.—A soldier who kicked a crucifix, had his leg shot off in the next battle. A son struck his father and his hand was immediately paralyzed. A blasphemer was suddenly struck dumb for life.

24. Is God good to us?

God is good to us: for He gives us many blessings, because He loves us.

"God is charity" (I. John 4, 8). *"Every best gift, and every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights"* (James 1, 17). *"Give glory to the Lord, for He is good"* (Ps. 106, 1).

1. We call good a man who is kind and generous. St. Nicholas had inherited a fortune from his father, but he distributed it all among the poor, and kept nothing for himself. There are some who are fond of giving. But no one loves to give more than God; He is most beneficent.

2. Think how much God has given to you:—your life, your sight, hearing, speech, hands and feet; your soul, your reason, your will, so that you may think, learn, pray. He called you to the true faith by baptism, gave you a guardian angel, good, pious parents to feed, clothe you, provide all your wants, to give you religious instruction. He gave you His own Son to die for you on the cross! His benefits are countless, and especially the graces He gives us to help us to go to heaven. How many things He has given us, and gives us every day without our asking for them! And what can we

give to God to show Him our gratitude for His favors? Only some of the things He has already given us! And why does He give us so much? Because He loves us; He loves us more than our parents love us. "God is love" (1 John, 4, 8).

3. We should show ourselves grateful to God by thanking Him, giving glory to Him (Ps. 106, 1), by loving Him, by trying to please Him and shunning all that displeases Him.

25. Is God merciful?

God is merciful: for He willingly pardons us, if we are truly sorry for our sins.

"As I live, saith the Lord God: I desire not the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way, and live" (Ezech. 33, 11).

Examples: David, Magdalen, the penitent thief. *Parables:* the good shepherd; the prodigal son.

God is *long-suffering* = He often waits a long time before punishing the sinner.

1. Merciful means full of mercy, of pity, of compassion, of sympathy. The merciful pity the suffering, suffer with them and grieve over the wicked. God pities sinners, because they are rushing to hell, where there is the greatest and endless suffering.

2. God shows His mercy by readily forgiving sinners who repent of their sins. A boy once offended his father by his impudence. Fearing severe punishment, he begged pardon of his father, saying he was sorry for his impudence, and would no more commit the same fault. His father, out of pity, out of mercy, forgave him. Thus does God act toward the sinner who begs forgiveness and promises to amend.

3. God pardons willingly, because He is merciful. He forgives the sinner who is sincerely sorry for his sins, not once only, but as often as he craves

forgiveness. God is infinitely merciful. No matter how often and how greatly we may have offended God, we must never say: "I am too bad for God to forgive me." That is despair—a greater sin than all the others. Judas despaired thus, hanged himself and went to hell.

4. God has the right to punish the sinner immediately after his first mortal sin, but He usually does not do so, for He is long-suffering, and waits for the sinner to do penance. God even treats the sinner kindly, tries to convert him through the priest, through good people, through His many graces.

Examples.—King David had sinned very grievously against the fifth and sixth commandments; he did penance and prayed a long time for forgiveness, and God sent the prophet Nathan to tell him his sins were forgiven. Mary Magdalen had been a great sinner and had given public scandal; but when she came to Jesus and begged for pardon, He said to her: "Thy sins are forgiven thee." St. Peter had denied our Lord with fearful oaths, but Jesus cast a merciful look upon him and forgave him his sins. One of the thieves crucified with Jesus had been wicked all his life; when dying on the cross, he begged Jesus for mercy, and Jesus promised him paradise.—(Parables of the Lost Sheep, and the Prodigal Son.)

26. Is God faithful?

God is faithful: for He keeps His promises and carries out His threats.

"Heaven and earth shall pass, but My words shall not pass" (Matt. 24, 35).

Examples: The menace and the promise in Paradise.

1. He who keeps his word is faithful. We should always keep our word, except when it is im-

possible for us to do so. We should never promise what we cannot or will not keep. Sometimes good people, through no fault of theirs, are not able to keep their word, or forget all about it. But God always can and always does keep His word; He never forgets it. He keeps all His promises and all His threats.

2. God promises heaven to the good, and threatens the wicked with hell. He who remains good till death, will surely go to heaven; whilst he who dies in mortal sin, will surely be forever punished in hell. God threatened death to Adam, if he disobeyed; Adam disobeyed, and death carried him off in due time. God promised men a Redeemer, and at the appointed time the Redeemer came.

Application. Often think of God. Rejoice that you are a child of God; love Him, fear Him, have confidence in Him. Thank Him and often pray to Him.

We should love to think often of God, who is so good, so bountiful toward us. We ought to rejoice that God, who is so good, so great, is our Father; no one is richer, greater or better than our Father in heaven. Let us love God, who is so good, who so greatly loves us, who loves us more than our parents, etc., can love us. Let us fear God who threatens to punish the wicked and fulfils His threats. The wicked cannot hide from Him or escape His justice. Let us trust in God who is so good, so ready to assist and relieve us in our wants. Let us thank God for all His benefits toward us at every moment of our life. Let us love to pray to Him, to speak to Him, to ask Him for all we need. Let us beseech Him to keep us from sin, to give us strength to overcome temptations and the devil, to help us always to do our duty, especially if it is hard or painful.

The Blessed Trinity.

27. Are there more Gods than one?

There is but one God.

The heathen (or pagans) do not know the true God; they believe in many gods. But even our reason tells us that there can be only one God. God is the supreme, that is, the highest of beings. There cannot be more than one highest; if there were two, neither of them would be supreme—hence neither would or could be God. In like manner, there can be only one God, because God is the most perfect being, and the sovereign Lord and Master of all things, and as such cannot have an equal.

28. How many persons are there in God?

There are three persons in God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

29. Is each of the three Persons true God?

Each of the three Persons is true God.

The Father is true God, the Son is true God, the Holy Ghost is true God. — The Father is almighty, the Son is almighty, the Holy Ghost is almighty. The Father is eternal, etc. (All divine attributes.)

There is but one God; but there are three Persons in God. A person is one that thinks and acts of himself, as he wills. Each one of us here is a person, each angel is a person. Why?—In God there are three Persons, and each Person is true God, having what God has, what belongs to God. What we say of God, v. g., that He is good, wise,—we say also of each of the three Persons. (Recapitulate the divine attributes.)

30. Are these three Persons only one God?

These three Persons are only one God.

The Son has *the same* nature, the same eternity, the same omnipotence as the Father and the Holy Ghost.

Comparison: Understanding, will, memory = *one* soul.

Among men three persons cannot make but one man; three persons are three men, for each person makes one man. But it is different in God. Each Person has the very same divine nature as the other two. All men have the same kind of nature; but no two men have the very same, identical nature, for each man has his own body and soul. Each of the three divine Persons has the very same divine nature, the very same holiness, perfections, as the other two. This we cannot understand; it is not against, but above our reason.

Comparison. We cannot find anything exactly like the three Persons in God, but only something somewhat similar. In our soul there are three faculties—the understanding, or reason, the will and the memory. We think with our understanding, do things through our will and remember things with our memory. Our will is different from our understanding and our memory, and our memory is different from our understanding; but all three are one soul. In like manner the Father is distinct from the Son and the Holy Ghost, and the Son is also distinct from the Holy Ghost; and yet the three Persons are but one and the same God. The Father is God, but the same God as the Son, and the Holy Ghost is God, but also the same God as the Father and the Son.

31. What do we call one God in three Persons ?

We call one God in three Persons, the Blessed Trinity.

"Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matt. 28, 19). *"There are three who give testimony in Heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one"* (I. John 5, 7).

The Blessed Trinity is a *mystery.* — Feast of the Blessed Trinity. Sign of the cross. Glory be to the Father, etc.

Mystery = a truth which we cannot fully understand.

1. By the Blessed Trinity is meant that there is one God in three Persons, that each of the three Persons is God, and that the three Persons are but one God. We pray to God—to the Blessed Trinity, or to any of the three divine Persons.

2. The Blessed Trinity is a mystery, the deepest and most incomprehensible mystery. Mystery means something secret or hidden. But in religion it means a truth so high or so deep, that our reason cannot explain or understand it. Jesus Christ revealed the mystery of the Blessed Trinity, especially when He said to His apostles: "Teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." You are all baptized and are children of God. Jesus Christ Himself said how we should baptize—"in the *name,*" and not "in the *names.*" Why? Because the three divine Persons are but one God. How this is or can be, we do not know, nor can any man or angel fully understand it, for it is the greatest of mysteries.

We need not be astonished at meeting mysteries in religion, for almost everything in nature, everything on earth is a mystery. We know that a seed planted in the ground brings forth a plant; but *how* can this happen; how can a plant grow, how do its roots draw sap from the ground, and how does the same sap go through the plant and form bark, leaves, flowers, blossoms, etc.! We know that all this takes place, but we do not know

how all this is produced. It is a mystery. Another thing that daily takes place in ourselves is a deep mystery. How does our food become changed into our body? How can such a wonderful thing be performed by our stomach and our other digestive organs? It is and will ever remain a mystery to us in this life. If we cannot explain and fully understand simple facts daily taking place around and in us, how can we expect to understand the inner being and life of God!

St. Augustine, the great and learned Father and Doctor of the Church, when writing a book on the Blessed Trinity, took a walk one day along the sea shore to think over that great mystery. After walking some time, he believed that he had found out all about the Blessed Trinity, and could understand it well; and he turned back to go home and write it down at once, lest he should forget it. He now saw a beautiful little boy dipping water with a shell from the sea into a small hole he had made in the sand. The hole was already full, and every time the boy poured water into it, the water would run back into the sea; but the boy still kept pouring water into it. St. Augustine had stopped to look on. At last he said: "Little boy, what are you doing?" The boy replied: "I am going to empty this great sea and put all the water now in it into this little hole." St. Augustine then said: "You can never do that; for how can all the water of this immense sea get into that little hole! Do you not see that the hole is already full and cannot hold any more, and that all the water you are now putting into it runs back into the sea as fast as you pour it into the hole?" The boy, who was an angel, then stood up and said: "Augustine, it is far easier for me to empty the whole sea into this little hole, than for you, with your little bit of

reason, to understand and grasp the infinitely deep mystery of the Being of God, of the Most Blessed Trinity.

The sign of the cross reminds us of the Blessed Trinity. It is a holy sign, for it signifies that Jesus died for us on the cross; the words are holy, for they were taught us by Jesus Christ; it is full of meaning, for it contains an act of faith in the death of Jesus Christ and in the mystery of the Blessed Trinity; it is a powerful sign, for by it the priest blesses, since it is from Jesus on the cross that all blessings come to us; it drives away the devil, for Jesus Christ overcame him by the cross; the devils dread it very much. Some bad men tried to kill St. Benedict, and offered him a cup of poisoned wine to drink. The saint made the sign of the cross over it, and the cup was broken and the wine was spilt, and his life was saved. St. Cunegunda's bed was on fire; she made the sign of the cross over it, and the fire was extinguished. St. Francis Xavier made the sign of the cross over the drinking water in the ship, that was all salt, and the water became good and sweet.—We should honor the Blessed Trinity by reciting often the Glory be to the Father, etc.

32. Has each Person of the Blessed Trinity bestowed upon us a special benefit?

Each Person of the Blessed Trinity has bestowed upon us a special benefit, for:

God the Father has created us,
God the Son has redeemed us,
God the Holy Ghost has sanctified us.

Creation — Redemption — Sanctification.

The three divine Persons are distinct from each

other, but equal in all things. They are one in themselves and in what they do. It was the Blessed Trinity that created the world, redeemed and sanctified it. But as each divine Person is distinct from the other two, each one does something distinct, or special. Hence we attribute something special to each. We say God the Father created the world, although both the Son and the Holy Ghost also co-operated in the creation. The Son became man and redeemed mankind; but in this the Father and the Holy Ghost had a share. The Holy Ghost sanctifies the world, but He is sent by the Father and the Son. Cardinal Bellarmine makes the following comparison with regard to the Incarnation. A man is helped by two other men to put on a coat; although all three are engaged in this, nevertheless only one puts on the coat. God the Father sent the angel Gabriel to announce the Incarnation of the Son to Mary; the Incarnation was effected by the operation of the Holy Ghost, but only the Son became man.

Application. Often say with devotion: "Glory be to the Father who created me. Glory be to the Son who redeemed me. Glory be to the Holy Ghost who sanctified me." — "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end." Amen. — Often make the sign of the cross, in honor of the Most Holy Trinity.

Let us thank God the Father for creating us, otherwise we would not exist; let us thank God the Son for redeeming us, otherwise we could never escape hell; let us thank God the Holy Ghost for the sanctifying grace which enables us to gain heaven. Let us always pray to God with attention and fervor.

The World.

33. Who created Heaven and earth?

God created Heaven and earth.

34. What means: God created Heaven and earth?

God created Heaven and earth means: He made them out of nothing.

35. What do we call God, because He created Heaven and earth?

Because God created Heaven and earth, we call Him Creator of Heaven and earth.

36. What do we call Heaven and earth, and all things?

We call Heaven and earth and all things: the world.

Things created by God = creatures.

To create means to make something out of nothing. This men and angels cannot do; they need some material out of which to make things. But God does not need any. All He needs to do in order to make a thing, is to will it. For instance, in the beginning He said: "Let there be light," and immediately light was made; before He had said this, there was no light anywhere. To create the world God employed six days, making, by merely willing it, light on the first day, the firmament on the second day, dry land and plants on the third, the sun, moon and stars on the fourth, fishes and birds on the fifth, animals on land and man on the sixth. Had he so willed, He could have created all in a moment. On the seventh day God rested, that is, He ceased creating anything new. The things God made are called creatures. (Ask questions on this point.)

37. Why did God create all things?

God created all things for His own honor and glory.

Intelligent beings honor God by serving Him.

1. Why does your father work? To earn money. Why does he need money? To support his family. Why do you eat? To grow strong, to keep up your life. There is a reason, an object for all we do. In like manner God has a reason for all He does. He does all for His own glory, to cause all beings to honor and praise Him.

2. Some creatures are rational; others are irrational, that is, some have understanding, others have none. Men and angels have reason and understanding wherewith they can honor and praise God. We honor God when we think or say: "God is good, powerful, etc.; God created me; He is my Lord." We honor God also when we do His will, when we serve Him. The other living creatures on earth have no understanding; they cannot honor God as we do.

3. The creatures that are inanimate, that is, that have no life, as the sun, the moon, the stars; the living creatures, such as plants, birds, animals, honor God in their own way by doing what He made them for.

4. Although they cannot think or say how good and great God is, they can help us to think and say it. When we see everything in the world so fine and beautiful, in such a wonderful order, we perceive how great and wise God is, and thus we glorify Him. The angels also do the same.

5. All creatures must honor God, even the devils and the damned in hell; they must say at least that God is just, and that His judgments are right.

6. We ought to honor and glorify God, especially by often thinking of God, by often making a good intention, particularly in the morning, saying, for instance: "All I think, say or do (such as eating, drinking, praying, playing, going to school, studying, working), all shall be for the glory of God."

38. What means: God preserves the world?

God preserves the world, means: He keeps it in existence by His all-powerful will.

1. God did not make the world so that it could stand or get along by itself, independently of Him, as, for instance, a house that is built can get along without the builder. But the world is like a word we utter, which lasts only so long as we are uttering it, and stops existing as soon as we have pronounced it. If we wish it to last long, we have to continue uttering it as long as we wish it to last. (Illustrate by the exclamation—oh!). Just like this book; as long as I hold it up, it will not fall; but as soon as I let it go, it falls to the floor. So long as God holds up the world by His power, it lasts; but if He were to cease doing so, it would fall back to nothing, and no longer exist.

2. God preserves us also every moment of our life. Otherwise we should soon fall back to nothing. As many years, days, hours, minutes, seconds you have been in the world, so many moments has God preserved you. Therefore, often think of this, and show yourself grateful to Him.

3. He preserves all things by the same power by which He created them.

39. What means: God governs the world?

God governs the world, means: He directs all things according to His wisdom.

The father governs the family and directs everything. The teacher does the same in the school; the priest in the parish, the bishop in the diocese, the Pope in the Church, the government in the state, etc. God governs and directs everything in the world as He wills; keeps nature in order; regulates the seasons, day and night, the growth of plants. He cares for every one, even for the youngest and the poorest.

40. Can anything happen without the will or permission of God?

Nothing can happen without the will or permission of God.

"Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing: and not one of them shall fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered" (Matt. 10, 29, 30).

God cares for all things, however insignificant they may be; for instance, the sparrows, the hairs on our head. There are some things which He does not will, but only permits. Who knows? For instance, a boy plays carelessly with a toy pistol. hurts himself and bleeds. Does God will that? No, but He permits it. He is like a mother that lets her baby walk by itself; it falls; the mother does not will the fall, but only permits it that the baby should learn how to walk.

41. Why does God permit sin?

God permits sin, because He has given man free will.

Sin is the worst thing in the world; far worse than hunger, sickness, death. We should rather die than commit sin. God who is infinitely good, does not will sin, but hates it; and yet He does not prevent it, because He respects the free will

He gave us. God does not wish to compel us to serve Him, but wishes us to serve Him freely, by our own will. He who does not use his free will right and will not serve God, commits a sin. God cannot prevent him from committing a sin without depriving him of his free will; and He will never deprive him of his free will which He gave him when He created him. Thus you see how God permits sin without willing it. Suppose you are out playing and your mother calls you; since you have a free will, you are able to refuse to go, although it is your duty to obey. But because you do not obey, you deserve punishment, for you have freely done wrong. In like manner, when you abuse your free will and refuse to obey God, to serve Him freely, you justly deserve to be punished by Him. If you obey and serve Him freely, you do right and deserve a reward from God. You see now that because you have a free will, you are responsible for what you do, and deserve reward if you make a good use of your free will and do right, and you deserve punishment if you abuse your free will and disobey God.—There was once a boy who would not go to school; but his father took him by the hand and compelled him to go to school. Did that boy deserve any credit for going to school? No; because he did not do so freely; he could not help it. Now God could compel us to serve Him as that father compelled his son to go to school; but He will not do so, because He would thereby deprive us of our liberty, of our free will.

Application. *Divine Providence* cares for all things. *"Casting all your care upon Him, for He hath care of you"* (I. Peter 5, 7). God also knows how to turn evil into good. *"You thought evil against me: but God turned it into good"* (Gen. 50, 20, Joseph in Egypt). Even sufferings are good for the just and for the sinner. *"To them*

that love God, all things work together unto good" (Rom. 8, 28).

Divine Providence knows the future as well as the present and the past, and so directs all things that in the end all things come out as He wills. Just like Joseph in Egypt, knowing from God that there would be first seven years of plenty and then seven years of scarcity, prepared for the latter by collecting an immense amount of breadstuffs during the years of plenty. In like manner, but far more perfectly, does God arrange things.

What are cares? Your father is out of work, has no money, and worries about supporting his children.—A boy longs to become a priest; but worries much, because his parents are poor and cannot pay for his education.—A girl is preparing for her first holy Communion; a few weeks before the appointed day she falls sick, and worries very much, lest she be not able to make it then.

These are cares. Now let us trust in God and cast all our cares upon Him, for He who cares for all things will care for us also; He is goodness itself, He is our loving Father.—Poor little Fred, only eight years old, had one day to go to school without breakfast, for his father had long been sick and was too poor to pay for a doctor and for medicines; now there was no food left, and no money to pay for it. On his way to school Fred entered the church with a sad heart and went to pray before the altar. Thinking he was alone in church, he prayed aloud, saying: "O Lord, help us; cure my sick father, that he may be able to go to work, for we have no money and nothing to eat." But a good lady was then in the church and overheard his prayer. When Fred went home at the noon recess, he found plenty to eat, for the good lady had brought a basketful of good things

and also a skilful doctor to cure Fred's father. Thus was his prayer heard.

God permits sin also that He may draw good out of evil, as we may see from the history of Joseph. The sin of his brothers was used by God to save the whole family from death by starvation. The murder of the Holy Innocents opened heaven for them.

Sufferings are good for sinners and for the just. It is a means of conversion for sinners; in sickness and pain they pray and reflect on their wickedness, and are moved to amend their life. By sufferings the just do penance for their little faults, shorten their purgatory, or even escape it altogether and gain merit in heaven, for God will reward forever their patience in suffering. (Hence Rom. 8, 28, as given above.)

The Angels.

42. How are creatures divided?

Creatures are divided into visible and invisible creatures.

43. Which are the invisible creatures?

The invisible creatures are the angels.

Innumerable angels.—*The nine choirs:* Angels, Archangels, Principalities; Powers, Virtues, Dominations; Thrones, Cherubim and Seraphim.—*The Archangels:* Michael, Raphael, Gabriel. "The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary."

Creature = a thing created, and is a name applied to all those things which God has created, or made out of nothing. Some creatures are visible, that is, can be seen with our eyes, or perceived by some of our senses (hearing, smell, taste, feeling or touch); all those that cannot be perceived by any of our bodily senses, are invisible; for instance, the angels, our soul.

Angel is a Greek word signifying messenger. He who is sent to say or bring something to some

one, is a messenger. God often sends angels as messengers to men; in fact, He sends an angel to every one of us—our guardian angel. Angels are pure spirits; they have no bodies and, therefore, we cannot see them with our bodily eyes or perceive them with any of our senses. In some cases God enables persons to see angels, for instance, at the Annunciation the Blessed Virgin saw the angel Gabriel, and the shepherds saw the angels announcing the birth of Jesus Christ. St. Frances of Rome could see her guardian angel; he was brighter than the sun and wonderfully beautiful. The angels cannot be seen, unless they put on an appearance of a body. The angels cannot be everywhere, but only in one place at a time; but they can go very quickly from one place to another; that is why they are represented with wings; and with wings spreading out, to show they are always ready to go where God may send them. Are there any angels here? Yes. How many? At least as many as there are children, etc., in this room (or place). Why?—There are always a great number of angels around the altar during Mass, especially after the consecration. What are they doing there?

How many angels are there? So many that they cannot be counted. On earth there are about 1,500,000,000—one for every human being.—Are all the angels equal? No; they are divided into nine choirs, or classes—one above the other—like grades in a school. Archangel means more than a mere angel. Holy Scripture give the names of three of the archangels—St. Michael, St. Gabriel and St. Raphael. After their creation many angels, seeing themselves so beautiful and so perfect, became proud and wished to equal God, and thus rebelled against Him. But St. Michael would not

join them; he said: "Who is like unto God?" and putting himself at the head of the good angels, drove the rebels out of heaven into hell. Thenceforth he was called Michael, which means "Who is like unto God." He is the protector of the Church. His feast is celebrated on September 29. —St. Raphael guided and protected young Tobias on his journey, and gave him a remedy to cure his father's blindness. His name means "Medicine of God." His feast is celebrated on October 24.— St. Gabriel, whose name means "Power, or strength, of God," was sent to announce to the prophet Daniel the time when the Redeemer would come, and to the priest Zachary, that he would have a son who would point out the Redeemer, and to the Blessed Virgin, that God had chosen her to be the Mother of the Redeemer.—What did St. Gabriel say to Mary? His feast falls on March 18.

41. What gifts has God given to the angels?

God has given to the angels: great wisdom, great power and especially sanctifying grace.

Raphael; the three young men in the fiery furnace; Peter delivered from prison by an angel.

The lowest angel knows more than all men together. The angels need not to study as we do, in order to learn. When they look at a thing, they at once understand it; they know all about the stars, the growth of plants, all that is hidden in the earth; but they do not know all things, for, as Jesus said, they know not when the general judgment will be.

The lowest angel is more powerful than all men together. A bad king once ordered three pious young men to be thrown into a big furnace, because they would not adore idols.—God sent an angel

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to them, and the angel prevented the fire from doing them any harm.—When bad men had put St. Peter into prison, an angel came to take off his chains and open the big locked gates without keys, and to bring St. Peter out through the guards, so that they could not see him.

When God created the angels, He bestowed sanctifying grace on them and made them holy and beautiful.

45. Did all the angels remain good?

Not all the angels remained good; many became proud and refused to serve God.

For a time all the angels were good and beautiful. When they were tried, many revolted against God, following Lucifer, their ringleader, who wished to be like God himself.

46. How did God punish the bad angels?

God punished the bad angels by casting them into hell forever.

Devil, evil spirits, Satan, Lucifer.

The sin of the angels was the first sin committed in the world. It lasted only a moment. God created hell, and ordered St. Michael to cast the bad angels into it. Their ringleader Lucifer is also called Satan, the evil one, the evil spirit, the devil. Devil is a name given also to all the bad angels; they are also called evil spirits. They have understanding and will, but can think and do only what is wicked.

You see from this how God punishes sin. A moment before their sin those angels were good, beautiful and happy, and now they are forever wicked, hideous and unhappy.

47. What do the good angels do?

The good angels forever praise and serve God.

God rewarded the good angels for being faithful, and kept them in heaven to share His own happiness forever, for God is just, and not only punishes the wicked, but also rewards the good. In heaven the angels see God so good, so beautiful, so glorious; they honor and praise Him, singing Holy, holy, holy, so sweetly. They serve God and most faithfully do His will, and they are so happy to be able to serve Him. They are always ready to obey Him, and obey Him so promptly that they are represented in pictures with outstretched wings.

48. What do the good angels do for us?

The good angels protect us, pray for us, and prompt us to do good.

"He hath given His angels charge over thee: to keep thee in all thy ways" (Ps. 90, 11).—Lot, Tobias.

The good angels love men, because they love God and everything that God loves. We see this from the beautiful hymn the angels sang when our Savior was born: "Glory be to God in the highest, and peace to men on earth." They rejoiced because the Son of God brought salvation to men. When a sinner does penance, the angels in heaven rejoice, says our Lord. The angels protect us against the devils. They pray to God to bestow many favors upon us; they inspire us with good thoughts, and encourage us to do what is right, v. g., to obey our parents.

God appointed the angels to care for us (Ps. 90, 11). Sodom and Gomorrha were so full of very wicked people that God resolved to destroy them. But there lived in one of those cities a very good man with his family; his name was Lot. An

angel came to lead him and his family out of the city and save them from death. Scarcely were they out of the way, when fire from heaven destroyed those cities and everybody in them.—Who remembers what I said about the angel Raphael and Tobias?

49. Who are the angels that especially protect us?

The angels that especially protect us are our guardian angels.

"Behold I will send My angel, who shall go before thee. Take notice of him and hear his voice" (Exod. 23, 20, 21).

Each person has a special angel sent by God to guard and protect him. We are never alone; an angel is always with us to guard and protect us in danger. How often little children are preserved from death by heavy falls, etc., by their guardian angels! One day a big wagon with its large wheels ran over a little child, and everybody believed that the child was crushed to death; but no! when the wagon had passed, the child got up and ran to its mamma, saying: "If I had not prayed this morning to my guardian angel, I should be dead now!" —Once a four-year-old child fell from a fourth-story window on a heap of hard stones and rolled down into a pond full of water. His parents ran down like lightning, expecting to find their child killed or drowned; but the child was only wet and not hurt at all! Did not his guardian angel protect him? There was a boy who loved to serve Mass; one day he came to serve at evening devotions, but could not find his surplice, and the priest went to the altar without him. Evening services had just begun, when a big stone fell on the very spot where that boy would have been kneeling, if he had found his surplice. Hardly was the evening service over when the boy found his surplice!

50. What should we do to honor our guardian angel?

To honor our guardian angel, we should

1) often think of him,
2) sincerely thank him,
3) willingly obey him,
4) daily pray to him.

Since our guardian angel does so much for us, we should honor him in a special manner. First, we ought often to think of him. You often think of your parents, of those you love, of those who are good to you. Your guardian angel is always with you, by day and by night, everywhere, as your good friend; think, then, often of him. Remember, you are never alone, for your guardian angel is with you, protecting you; hence do not fear being in the dark.

Thank him for all he has done and is doing for you. Perhaps if he had not protected you, you would have committed plenty of mortal sins and be now in hell forever. Thank him for inspiring you with good thoughts and preserving you from evil ones.

Willingly obey your guardian angel when he speaks to your heart to do—, to obey, to pray, to keep away from bad companions, not to do—. When you sin, you displease him and make him feel sorry for you.

Finally, often pray to your guardian angel; especially in the morning ask him to preserve you from sin during the day and also from bodily harm; ask him to help you to study, to conquer temptation, and to keep you away from all that is bad. Pray to him at night, that he may watch over you and protect you from harm. Ask him to protect you, especially at the hour of death. The feast of the guardian angels falls on October 2d.

51. What does the devil do against us?

The devil tempts us to sin, in order to bring us into hell.

The devil hates us; he tries his best to bring us into hell with himself, for he wishes to make us suffer, to make us share his torments. For this reason he endeavors to fill our minds with bad thoughts, with temptations; he sends us bad companions to lead us astray, to cause us to commit mortal sin and lose our soul.

52. What must we do when tempted by the devil?

When tempted by the devil we must resist the temptations and pray that they may not injure us.

"Watch ye, and pray that you enter not into temptation" (Mark. 14, 38). *"Your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, goeth about, seeking whom he may devour. Whom resist ye, strong in faith!"* (I. Peter 8, 9).

If a strong man would lay hold of you to kill you, would you not try to defend yourself and do all you could to prevent him? So you must do when the devil tempts you, for then he wishes to kill your soul. You must resist with all your might, when he brings to your mind wicked thoughts (disobedience, revenge, impurity, theft, lying, etc.), and at once pray to Jesus and Mary, and to your guardian angel to help you. If you do this, you will conquer the devil and make him run away from you. —A savage dog is usually chained and cannot bite you, unless you go near him; so long as you keep out of his reach, he cannot harm you. In like manner, keep away from the devil, from the danger of sinning, from bad companions. Therefore, be careful where you go and with whom you go. "Watch ye," etc., and pray every morning, that you may be able to keep out of temptation. Do not go too near the devil, that roaring lion.

Application. Love your guardian angel. Pray to him night and morning, and particularly when tempted. In dangers of soul and body fear not, for your guardian angel is always near you.

Man.

53. What is man?

Man is a creature composed of a body and a soul.

54. Who were our first parents?

Our first parents were Adam and Eve.

55. How did God make Adam?

God made the body of Adam out of earth, and breathed an immortal soul into it.

God formed Eve out of a rib of Adam.—Paradise.

1. God made man partly visible and partly invisible. Man has a visible body with visible members, and an invisible soul, or spirit, with invisible faculties. The body without the soul is not a man but a corpse; and the soul alone is not man either.

2. God first created one man and one woman, and from these all other men and women come. Adam and Eve, as they are called, were to have children and bring them up; and their children, when grown up were also to have children and bring them up. Hence Adam and Eve are called our first parents.

3. First God created Adam by making a body out of clay and breathing into it a living soul, which should impart life to the body. Before receiving the soul, Adam's body was, like a statue, without life, sight, hearing, motion, etc. When the soul came into it, Adam's body became alive, was able to see, etc. From this you can see what our soul does in our body.

4. After his creation Adam was all alone. God cast a deep sleep on him, and took one of his ribs and made out of it the body of Eve and gave it a living soul. When Adam awoke, he saw Eve and was glad; and God married them to each other.

5. God placed Adam and Eve in a most beautiful place called Paradise, full of fine streams of water, of all sorts of trees and plants and flowers and excellent fruits; with birds singing in the trees, and all kinds of animals, all so tame and so obedient to Adam. Adam and Eve had good times, no pain, no suffering, and only a little pleasant work to keep Paradise in order.

56. What is the soul?

The soul is an immortal spirit, created by God to His own image and likeness.

Understanding, free will, immortality; thereby the soul is like to God, an image of God.

1. The body of man is the most beautiful of visible things in the world; but man's soul is 1,000 times more beautiful. It is a spirit, i. e., like an angel, invisible, endowed with understanding and free will. With our understanding we think, count, plan buildings, invent, v. g., the telegraph, the steam engine. No mere animal can do this, for it has no spiritual soul. Man has free will, by which he may choose to do or to omit, v. g., to eat when hungry, or to refrain from eating; but an animal cannot do that, for when hungry, it eats if any food offers, etc.

2. The soul is immortal; it will never die. Death in man is the separation of the soul from the body; when the soul leaves the body, the body is dead; it is without life, it is a corpse, and soon rots and crumbles to pieces. But the soul continues to live, to think, to will, and since it is not

composed of parts, it cannot crumble and fall to pieces. The soul can never die, but will live on forever and ever. Jesus Christ raised several dead people, v. g., Lazarus, to life by bringing back their souls into their bodies.

3. The soul is invisible, immortal; it is an image, a picture of God; it looks like God—like a photograph. God is a spirit, and so is the soul; God has understanding and free will, and the soul also; God is everlasting, and the soul is immortal. When you see the likeness of a friend, you know immediately whom that likeness represents. If we could see God and see our soul, we could at once see that the soul is God's likeness. God's likeness is in the soul and not in the body.

57. What special gift did God give our first parents?

God gave our first parents the special gift of sanctifying grace.

1. When your father gives you something to which you have no right, no claim, he bestows a gift upon you. God gave to Adam and Eve, besides their souls and their bodies, a special gift called sanctifying grace. Through sanctifying grace they became holy and pleasing to God, and obtained a right to heaven. It was the grandest gift God can give on earth, and made our first parents equal to the angels in heaven.

2. Sanctifying grace makes the soul so noble, so beautiful, that no one can describe it; only God and the angels can do so. God bestows sanctifying grace on men, on children, when they are baptized. The soul of an unbaptized child is like a dark night, and the soul of a baptized child is like the brightest day at noon. God bestowed also other gifts on our first parents. He gave them a clear mind, capable of easily learning and understanding

things. Hence Adam was able to know all animals and give them their right names. Adam and Eve could speak well without having learned to do so. Their will was so good, that it had no wish for anything bad, but only for what was good;— not like children who see, v. g., fruit, and wish to steal it, etc. Now-a-days men more easily wish what is bad than what is good. The bodies of our first parents were not subject to fatigue, pains, sickness or death. Paradise was full of trees with fine fruits; one of them was called the tree of life; so long as Adam and Eve would eat of its fruits, they would not die, but would, after a long and happy life, go to heaven in body and soul.

58. What was the effect of sanctifying grace in our first parents?

By sanctifying grace our first parents were made children of God and heirs of Heaven.

Natural gifts (cannot be lost); *supernatural* (may be lost); the supernatural life of the soul.

1. We cannot describe sanctifying grace, for it is only in the soul, and the soul is invisible; but we can tell what it does. It is far more beautiful than anything we see or can imagine. It made our first parents holy, children of God and heirs of heaven. Before receiving it they were only creatures of God and had no right to heaven. As children of God, they had in them something of God's life, for children resemble their parents, and this was sanctifying grace. And as children inherit from their parents, they were destined to possess and enjoy heaven, and it was theirs already for they had a right and a claim to it. A father gives many things to his children already in his life-time, but gives them the most after his death, and thus they become

his heirs. In like manner, sanctifying grace, by making our first parents children of God, made them also His heirs.

2. God gave to Adam and Eve their bodies with their members and their senses, and their souls with all their faculties; these are called natural gifts. And He gave them besides sanctifying grace, a gift far greater and more precious than the natural gifts; it is therefore called a supernatural gift. Their soul was in itself already an image of God, but a rough one; but when it received sanctifying grace it became a much more beautiful and more perfect likeness of God. The natural gifts of man can never be lost or taken away, for in that case the person would cease to be human. But supernatural gifts can be lost; hence the soul can lose sanctifying grace, that is, its supernatural life, and be supernaturally dead and still be naturally immortal.

59. Did our first parents receive sanctifying grace for themselves only?

Our first parents did not receive sanctifying grace for themselves only; all mankind were to inherit it from them.

60. Why has no one inherited sanctifying grace from Adam and Eve?

No one has inherited sanctifying grace from Adam and Eve, because they lost it themselves.

God had intended that Adam and Eve's descendants should inherit, not only their natural gifts, but also their supernatural gifts. And if they have not, it is not God's fault, but the fault of Adam and Eve who, having lost it, could not give it to their children.

61. How did Adam and Eve lose sanctifying grace?

Adam and Eve lost sanctifying grace by committing a very grievous sin.

Mortal sin and sanctifying grace cannot be together in the soul. When mortal sin enters a soul, it drives out sanctifying grace. Just like a girl with a clean, white dress, will have a dirty dress if she falls into a mud hole. Sanctifying grace is to the soul like a white dress, making it beautiful; and mortal sin, like mud, making the soul filthy and ugly.

62. What sin did they commit?

They ate of the fruit which God had forbidden them to eat under pain of severe punishment.

Disobedience, pride, infidelity.

1. God wished to try if men would obey Him. He therefore told our first parents that they might eat of all the fine fruits in Paradise, except of the fruits of one tree; and that if they would eat of it, they should die. They needed not to eat the fruits of that tree, for they had all they could wish for on the other trees. They obeyed for a time. But the devil, jealous of them and wishing to bring them to hell, went into a serpent and got on the forbidden tree when he saw Eve going about Paradise. When she got near the tree, he called out to her: "Why did God forbid you to eat of the fruits on these trees?" Eve was not frightened when she saw and heard the serpent, for the serpents then did no harm. She ought to have gone away; but she came near and said: "God did not forbid us to eat of the fruit of the trees except this one, lest we should die." The devil, the father of lies, then said: "Oh! do not fear, eat of the fruit of this tree, and you will not die, but will know as much as God Himself, the difference between good

and evil." Eve was deceived by these words; she looked up and saw the fruits of that tree so fine, so tempting, and wishing to know as much as God, she took some of the fruit, ate it and gave some to Adam, and he ate some, too, in order to please her.

2. That was a very grievous sin, or rather several grievous sins; sins of disobedience, of pride, of unbelief. It was only a little fruit, and it was so easy for Adam and Eve to obey God, for they had plenty of much finer fruits; but they disobeyed God and obeyed the devil! They were proud, for they wished to become like God. They refused to believe God, who is truth itself, and they so easily believed the devil, that arch-liar. We ought not to condemn them harshly, for if we had been in their place, we would have done as they did.

63. What punishment did they receive for this sin?

In Punishment for this sin, they were driven from Paradise, had to suffer many hardships, and finally had to die.

"Cursed is the earth in thy work. Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return to the earth, out of which thou wast taken: for dust thou art, and into dust shalt thou return" (Gen. 3, 17-19).

By their sin our first parents lost sanctifying grace and were no longer children of God, but, of Satan. They were driven out of Paradise, and had to work hard at farming for their living. God cursed the earth on account of their sin, so that it would of itself produce only briars and thorns and weeds, and men would have to work hard to make it produce things fit to eat. Men, morever, would also be liable to suffer pain, sickness and death, and their bodies should return to dust. Adam did not die then, but lived 930 years in sorrow and pain.

64. What then do all men inherit from Adam?

From Adam all men inherit original sin.

Why do I not ask—from Adam *and Eve?* Because children usually inherit from their father, for he is the head of the family, and usually the one that earns all. All men inherited from Adam, not sanctifying grace, but sin. This sin is called original sin. All who are born, even infants, inherit this sin, and we are born into the world as enemies of God.

Comparison.—A king took fancy to a poor man and his wife, and gave them a fine house to live in, with many servants, fine horses and carriage and plenty of money, on condition that they would obey him. They obeyed him for a time, but at last they joined his enemies. This made the king angry, and he deprived them of all he had given them, and drove them away. Did any of their children inherit that fine house, etc.? No; on account of their wicked parents they were also hateful to the king. —Thus you may easily understand how, on account of Adam's sin, we could not inherit heaven or God's friendship, for he had lost both, and had become hateful to God.

65. What evils are caused by original sin?

Many evils are caused by original sin, especially these:

1) men are no longer children of God,
2) they have no right to Heaven,
3) they are ignorant, especially in matters of religion,
4) they are very much inclined to evil,
5) they must bear many sufferings,
6) they must all die.

"By one man sin entered into this world, and by sin death, and so death passed upon all men in whom all have sinned" (Rom. 5, 12).

With the sin of Adam we inherit all his miseries and the punishment of his sin.

1. Hence we are no longer children of God. We can be children of God only through sanctifying grace; but we do not inherit sanctifying grace, because Adam lost it by his sin.

2. Nor have we any right to heaven, for as we are no longer children of God, we cannot inherit heaven.

3. Original sin is the cause why our mind is not clear and cannot well understand things, especially spiritual things, v. g., the catechism. You can see this from Adam himself: before his sin he was so wise, but after his sin he foolishly tried to hide himself from God who sees all things! Men grew so foolish and unreasonable as to adore as gods animals, snakes, cats, fire, etc., etc.

4. Original sin has rendered us greatly inclined to sin, to wickedness, and made it hard for us to be good. You know it yourselves that it is hard to study, to obey, to pray, and easy to disobey, to be idle, to lie, etc.

5. Original sin also brought into the world all sickness, all suffering, sorrow, cold, heat, hunger, thirst, wars, calamities, death and every other physical evil.

6. Death came into the world only through original sin, for God had made death the penalty of disobedience. (Quote Rom. 5, 12.) We must all die, because we all sinned in Adam, for our will was included in his. Adam's sin was not only a personal sin, but it was also the sin of the human race.

66. Who alone was preserved from original sin?

The Blessed Virgin alone was preserved from original sin.

Mary was always in the state of grace. — Feast of the Immaculate Conception, December 8. Patron feast of the Church in America.

The Blessed Virgin Mary was created by God endowed with sanctifying grace. In her litany we say: Queen conceived without original sin, pray for us. God preserved her from it by a special privilege, called the Immaculate Conception. It is celebrated as a feast or holyday of obligation on December 8th in the United States, as the patron feast of our country.

It was quite proper that Mary should enjoy this privilege, for Eve, destined to be the mother of all mankind, was endowed with sanctifying grace at her creation; and Mary, destined to be the Mother of God Himself, must have been made far more holy than Eve. Mary was to be the Mother of Jesus Christ who was to free all men from sin; and Jesus would therefore first preserve His own Mother from all sin.

Mary was conceived without sin. She possessed sanctifying grace from the first moment of her life in a high degree, and never lost it, but always increased it. How beautiful, how holy, how lovely is Mary! She is our Mother also, our spiritual Mother, who is to bring us up for heaven and to lead us there. Try to be her good children, to please her by avoiding sin; pray to her to keep you from sin. Say to her: O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee. Wear her medal. (You will all, sooner or later, receive in holy Communion Jesus Christ whom Mary brought into the world. She had to be so pure to become His Mother; hence, endeavor to be pure in order to receive Jesus worthily into your heart.)

God did not preserve Mary from suffering, pain and sorrow; on the contrary, she suffered so much, that she is called the Mother of sorrows. She had seven principal sorrows. All this is not a real evil; God preserved her from sin, the only real evil. He did not give her riches, for she was poor and had to work; but He gave her holiness, the only real riches, the only thing that God prizes.

67. After the fall of our first parents, could any one enter Heaven?

After the fall of our first parents, no one could enter Heaven, because all men were sinners.

"There shall not enter into it (Heaven) anything defiled" (Apoc. 21, 27).

Before their sin Adam and Eve were so holy as to be deserving of heaven and near it; but after it they became wicked, and they and their descendants were justly excluded from heaven, because they were all stained with sin. (Quote Apoc. 21, 27.)

68. Did God then abandon man forever?

God did not abandon man forever, but showed him mercy.

After they had sinned, God could, if He wished, have cast our first parents at once into hell, because they had committed a very grievous sin. He could also, if He had wished, have rejected all their descendants forever, for their sin had closed heaven against all men. But God's mercy is infinite, and He easily forgives those who repent of their sins. For this reason He did not forever reject men.

69. How did God show mercy to man?

God showed mercy to man by promising him a Redeemer.

Redeemer = Saviour = one who redeems or saves.

70. What was the Redeemer to do for man?

The Redeemer was to take away sin from man, and regain for him sanctifying grace.

Regain = to gain anew, to recover what was lost.

1. God promised our first parents a Saviour who should free them from sin and hell, restore grace and open heaven again to them. Men after sin could not help themselves; they were chained by sin and by the devil, and needed some one to overcome sin and the devil, and give them back what they had lost through sin.

2. When Adam and Eve heard God's promise, they thanked God, believed in the Saviour to come, and seeing that God was so good to them, repented anew of their sin, patiently bore their sufferings and trials and were consoled by the thought that the Redeemer would repair the harm they had done; thus Adam lived for 930 years.

Application. Hate sin. It was sin that drove our first parents from Paradise, and brought every evil into the world. Consider that your soul is an image of God, and keep it free from sin.

You should hate sin above everything else, for nothing is more wicked, or more hideous, or more hurtful to us; it is the greatest, the only real evil. If our first parents had not sinned, we should be happy in Paradise and be sure of heaven. Since your soul is an image of God, keep it pure and holy like Him. The crucifix is another image of God; you would surely not let it fall into dirt, do not then soil your soul—an image of God, by sin which defiles more than any dirt.

Jesus Christ.

Second and Third Articles of the Creed.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord: Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary.

71. When did the promised Redeemer come?

The promised Redeemer came about four thousand years after the fall of our first parents.

The four Sundays of Advent.

1. God is faithful and keeps His promises. When He promised a Redeemer to our first parents, He did not say at what time He would send Him. He sent Him long, long after the fall; about 4,000 years. Why did God wait so long? God treated men as the father treated his prodigal son. A rich man had two sons. The younger one went one day to his father and impudently asked him for his share of his father's property. His father gave it to him, and the young man went out of the country. His father grieved, but did not run after him, lest he should think his father could not get along without him, and then he would have acted much worse toward his father. Hence, the father let him go, knowing that he would soon become so wretched, that he would gladly come back humble and obedient. And so it was. In like manner, if God had immediately or soon after the fall sent the Redeemer, people would not have cared very much for Him, or found out what a fearful evil sin is. So God let them wait until they fell into such misery, and could no longer help themselves, and therefore prayed much and longed for the Redeemer, feeling that they could no longer get along without Him.

2. But during those 4,000 years God did not en-

tirely abandon mankind. Most of men were idolaters, adoring as gods the stars, animals, statues, etc., and committing the most horrible and shameful sins; they went so far as to throw their children into the fire for their idols, killing men and giving them to wild beasts to eat. One nation, chosen by God, remained faithful—namely, the Jews, descendants from Abraham. From time to time God sent prophets to the Jews to tell them all about the Redeemer, of what family He would be, where He should be born, and all He would do and suffer for men, so that when the Redeemer would come, the Jews could at once recognize Him as the Redeemer promised and foretold. All those who believed in the coming Redeemer and kept the commandments were saved. The Redeemer was born Christmas night.

In memory of the 4,000 years the people waited for the Redeemer, the Church instituted the four weeks of Advent as a preparation for Christmas. During the holy season of Advent we ought to prepare for Christmas by prayer and penance, and long to have Jesus born in our hearts.

72. What is the name of the Redeemer?

The name of the Redeemer is Jesus Christ.

73. What means the word Jesus?

The word Jesus means Redeemer, or Saviour.

"Thou shalt call His name Jesus: for He shall save His people from their sins" (Matt. 1, 21). *"There is no other name under Heaven given to men, whereby we must be saved"* (Acts 4, 12).

74. What does the word Christ mean?

The word Christ means the Anointed.

Messiah. In the old law, the high-priests, kings and prophets were anointed: Christ is all this to us.

Jesus is our Redeemer, because He bought us from the slavery of the devil and sin; He is our

Saviour, because He saved us from sin and hell. This name comes from heaven, for God sent an angel to say to St. Joseph: "Thou shalt call His name Jesus; for He shall save His people from their sins." And St. Peter says: "There is no other name under heaven given to men, whereby we must be saved." This means that it is only through Jesus that men can be saved and go to heaven. Jesus received His name on the eighth day after His birth, when He was circumcised. The feast of Circumcision of Jesus is a holyday of obligation, and falls on January 1st.

Anointing is rubbing oil on some one with the hand or thumb. At baptism the child is anointed with holy oil on the breast, between the shoulders and on the crown of the head; at confirmation the person is anointed on the forehead with holy chrism; at ordination the priest's hands are anointed and consecrated; at extreme unction the five senses are anointed; the chalice, the altars and church bells are consecrated by anointing them with holy oil. Anciently kings were anointed at their coronation, and prophets to empower them to speak in the name of God, and also the Jewish high-priests. Through anointing, persons were consecrated to God and received special powers from Him. Jesus is the Anointed of God, for He is our High-priest, having offered the sacrifice of the cross and instituted the sacrifice of the Mass; He is our Prophet, for He preached the truth; He is also our King, Lord and Ruler. Christ in Hebrew means Messiah, that is, the One sent, or the promised Redeemer.

75. Who is Jesus Christ?

Jesus Christ is the Son of God Who was made Man for us.

Jesus is both God and Man = God-Man. In Jesus Christ there is only *one Person*, the Divine, but there are *two natures* in Him: the divine, and the human.

1. Jesus Christ is not God alone, nor man alone, but He is both God and man at the same time.

2. He is the only begotten Son of God, that is, God's only Son, His true Son. He is the second Person of the Blessed Trinity, equal to the Father; like Him eternal, almighty, infinitely holy, etc.

3. Although, through sanctifying grace, we also are children of God, we are nevertheless only His *adopted* children. A rich man had only one son. One cold day, as he was going out, he met a poor little boy thinly clad crying. He asked him: "What is the matter with you?" The poor boy answered: "Sir, I have no father, no mother; they are dead, and I am so poor; I have nothing to eat, no place to live in, and I am so cold and hungry." The rich man was good and kind-hearted. He took the little boy by the hand, and said: "Come with me, I'll be a father to you, and you'll be my son, and I'll take care of you." In this way the rich man adopted the poor little boy as his son, although he was not his true son. In like manner, God has adopted us as His children.

4. God the Son, became man for our sake. He is both God and man; He is God from all eternity; He became man 4,000 years after the creation, 1,900 years ago. He is God, because He has the divine nature and is the second Person of the Blessed Trinity. He is man, because He has the human nature, that is, a body and soul like ours. But He is only one Person, and His Person is divine with two natures, the divine and the human.

Comparison.—Put a steel knife for some time into the fire, and it will get very hot; it remains a steel knife able to cut, but being hot, it can also burn. In like manner Jesus Christ, as God, is almighty; and, as a babe, He is helpless; He is eternal because He is God, and mortal, because as man He died; as God, He is invisible, but visible as man. How

Jesus Christ can be both God and man is a mystery, which even angels cannot understand. It is called the Mystery of the Incarnation. As God-man Jesus Christ is our Lord. As God He always was our God, because He created us; but as God-man He is our Lord, because He redeemed us.

76. Who is the Mother of Jesus Christ?

The Mother of Jesus Christ is the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Mother of God. Jesus loved and honored Mary as his Mother. He that loves the Son must also love and honor the Mother.

1. When Jesus Christ became man, He had to have a Mother like all men. His Father is God the Father, from whom He has the divine nature. Who is the Mother of God? The Blessed Virgin Mary. She became the Mother of God and always remained a virgin. This is a great mystery. She is called Most Blessed, because she brought into the world the Son of God, who had taken His body from her.

2. Mary is therefore the highest in heaven, above all angels and men; she is next to God, the nearest relative to God; for she is His Mother. Therefore Jesus Christ loved and honored her more than all angels and men, and He wills that we all love and honor her. If you love Jesus, you will love Mary also.

77. By whom did the Blessed Virgin Mary conceive her divine Son?

The Blessed Virgin Mary conceived her divine Son by the Holy Ghost.

"*The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee*" (Luke 1, 35). First joyful mystery of the rosary: "The Annunciation." Feast of the Annunciation, March 25. — "The Angel of the

Lord declared unto Mary — and she conceived by the Holy Ghost."

Feast of the Visitation, July 2. Second joyful mystery of the rosary: "The Visitation."

1. The three Persons of the Blessed Trinity contributed to the mystery of the Incarnation. God the Father sent His Son to become man, God the Son became man through the Holy Ghost.

2. Mary was a poor pious virgin living at Nazareth, a little town in Palestine; she was rich before God in grace and virtue. One day when she was praying, the angel Gabriel, sent by God, appeared to her and said: "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed are thou among women." He told her that she was to become the Mother of the Son of God, of the Redeemer. Mary asked how this could be. Gabriel replied that it would be done through the operation of the Holy Ghost. Then Mary said: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done to me according to thy word."

3. This happened on March 25th; for this reason we celebrate on that day the feast of the Annunciation, because on it the angel *announced* to Mary that she would become the Mother of God. This is the first joyful mystery of the rosary. Every day in the morning, at noon and in the evening the church bell, or Angelus, is run, in remembrance of the mystery of the Incarnation and Mary's Annunciation. All good Christians, when they hear that bell ring, recite the Angelus.—Not long after Mary visited St. Elizabeth, a near relative, carrying her Divine Son in a mysterious manner, and at the sound of her voice saluting St. Elizabeth, St. John Baptist was sanctified, and St. Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Ghost, said to Mary: "Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. Whence is it that the Mother of my

Lord comes to visit me?" This is called the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin, the second joyful mystery of the rosary; the feast of the Visitation falls on July 2d.

78. Who was St. Joseph?

St. Joseph was the spouse of Mary, and the foster-father of Jesus.

Feast of St. Joseph, March 19. — Patron of prayer, purity and a happy death. — Patron of labor and of laborers. — Patron of the Church. — Feast of the Patronage of St. Joseph, the third Sunday after Easter.

The Holy Family: Mary and Joseph.

1. Mary was the Mother of Jesus and God was His Father; but because that was a mystery that people should not then know, God appointed a good and holy man, who should act like a father to Jesus Christ. But God did not choose a great man, a rich man, but only a poor carpenter named Joseph; because Joseph was so good and so holy, God made him the husband of Mary and foster-father of Jesus. Joseph was married to Mary on January 23d. It was his duty to feed, clothe and care for Jesus; and therefore he is called the foster-father of Jesus.

2. St. Joseph's feast is kept on March 19th. He is very high in heaven and can do much for us, because on earth he was so holy, so near to Jesus Christ, and did so much for Him. Jesus obeyed him on earth, and will grant him in heaven all that he asks. He is the patron of innocence, of prayer and of a happy death. He holds a white lily, because he was so pure. He will obtain for us, if we pray to him, the grace to be pure and holy. We need prayer to be saved; we ought to pray for the grace to pray well. When we pray we speak to God. St. Joseph used to speak with Jesus every day, every hour; he loved to pray. Let us then ask

St. Joseph to obtain for us the grace to pray well, and he will obtain it for us. We ought to pray to St. Joseph for a holy death. His death was so holy; he alone enjoyed the blessing of dying in the arms of Jesus and Mary. Let us ask him every day for the grace to die a holy death, so that we may go to heaven. May we thus avoid the terrible misfortune of dying in the state of sin and of being lost forever.

3. St. Joseph is also the patron of work and of workmen. God wishes us to work for our living; He wishes our work to help us to gain heaven. Work is therefore holy. St. Joseph worked hard all his life; he worked for God; he loved to work; he is invoked by workmen and by all who are in temporal need, because during life he had to earn a living for Jesus and Mary. He is also the patron of the Church. He protects and prays for the Pope, the bishops, the priests and all the faithful. The feast of his Patronage is kept on the third Sunday after Easter.

4. The Holy Family. A family consists of the father, mother and children. The holiest family on earth consisted of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. In other families the father comes first, and then the mother and the children. But in the Holy Family the Son is first, then the Mother, then the foster-father. Who can tell the reason?

79. Why did the Son of God become Man?

The Son of God became Man, because He wanted to suffer and die for us.

As God He could neither suffer nor die.

If Jesus Christ had been only God, He could not have suffered and died. God wished His Son to suffer and die for our sins. Therefore the Son of God had to become man also, that He might be able to suffer and die for us.

80. Where was Jesus born?

Jesus was born in a stable at Bethlehem.

Christmas, December 25. Third joyful mystery of the rosary: "The Birth of Jesus Christ in Bethlehem." — *The Angels:* (Glory be to God on High). *The shepherds* (at the manger). The *three Kings* (Epiphany). January 6.

When Jesus was *forty days old,* Mary presented Him in the Temple. Feast of the Purification, February 2. Fourth joyful mystery of the rosary: "The Presentation of our Blessed Lord in the Temple." — Flight into Egypt. (Feast of the Holy Innocents, December 28).

When Jesus was *twelve years old,* He went with His parents to Jerusalem and remained there three days in the Temple. Fifth joyful mystery of the rosary: "The Finding of the Child Jesus in the Temple."

1. Mary and Joseph lived at Nazareth; the prophets had foretold that the Redeemer would be born at Bethlehem. When the time for the birth of Jesus came, God so arranged things that Mary and Joseph had to go to Bethlehem. When they reached that little town, they could find no place to lodge except an old miserable stable. There, at midnight, Jesus was born. Mary and Joseph adored Him, for that little Baby was the Son of God, true God. Mary then wrapped Him in swaddling-clothes (explain what they are), and laid Him on straw in the manger, for there was no cradle, no bed there. It was damp and chilly; there was no fire, no warm bed for the Infant Jesus. And yet He was the Lord of heaven and earth; He owned all things, but He was born poorer than the poorest. See how Jesus loved poverty; He loves the poor. In the crib He thought of you all, and prayed for you, for He was thus born for the love of you.

2. Not very far away some pious shepherds were watching in the dark night over their flocks, to protect them against wolves and thieves. All at once they saw a bright light from heaven around them, and an angel in the light. They got very

much afraid. But the angel said to them: "Fear not; I come to tell you good news."—Then he told them that the long expected Saviour was just born, and where they would find Him. Then there came many angels and they sang so beautifully "Gloria in excelsis Deo." "Glory be to God in the highest." When the angels got through singing, they disappeared. The shepherds went at once to see and adore the newly born Jesus. All this happened on December 25th, at midnight, that is, on Christmas day, a day full of joy for all, but especially for children. On Christmas day every priest is allowed to say three Masses, and everybody should try to hear three Masses on that joyous feast.

3. Not long after, three wise men came from a distant country to adore Jesus at Bethlehem. How did they find out that the Redeemer had just been born? They saw in the heaven a wonderful star. When they saw it, they knew it was the star of the Redeemer foretold over 1,500 years before. Many people had been looking for it; but when it appeared, only three: Caspar, Melchior and Baltassar, started to go to see the Saviour. The star went ahead and they followed it. It stopped over the poor stable. They went in, and adored the Infant Jesus and offered Him gifts—gold, a sign of love, as to their King, incense, a sign of prayer, as to God, and myrrh, a sign of patience in pain, as to a man. This was on the 6th of January, the feast of the three Kings, or the Epiphany, that is, the manifestation.

4. When Jesus was forty days old, Mary offered Him to God in the temple, as was commanded by the laws of the Jews. When Mary entered the temple, Simeon, a very holy old man, led by the Holy Ghost, came to meet them. He had prayed to God all his life not to let him die till he should see

the Redeemer. God heard his prayer. He took the Infant Jesus in his arms, and said he was now ready to die, since he had seen the Redeemer, who was to be the light of the Gentiles living until then in the darkness of error and sin. This feast is called the Purification, or Candlemas, and is kept on the second of February. On this day wax candles are blessed and carried in procession, in memory of Mary presenting Jesus in the temple. It is also the fourth joyful mystery of the rosary.

5. When Jesus was born, Herod was king. He was a cruel and bloodthirsty tyrant, who killed his own son, his wife, and thousands of men. When Herod heard that the Redeemer was born at Bethlehem, and that the wise men called Him King of the Jews, he became enraged, for he feared Jesus would take his crown away from him. He resolved to kill Jesus. But he did not know how to find Him. He therefore ordered his soldiers to kill all the baby boys in and around Bethlehem that were under two years of age; he expected Jesus would be among the killed. But the night before the massacre an angel appeared to Joseph, and told him to take Mary and Jesus quickly and flee to Egypt, and to stay there until he would tell them to return. Joseph obeyed at once, and the next day they were already far away, when Herod's soldiers killed all the baby boys under two years of age. They died to save the life of Jesus, and are now saints in heaven. They are called the Holy Innocents, and their feast is kept on December 28th. After Jesus, Mary and Joseph had been for some years in Egypt, the angel again came to Joseph to tell him to bring them back to Judea. They came back and went to live at Nazareth.

6. When Jesus was twelve years old, He went with Mary and Joseph to Jerusalem to keep the

feast of Easter according to the Jewish law. The feast lasted a whole week. When it was over, Mary and Joseph left Jerusalem for Nazareth, Mary going along with the women, and Joseph, with the men. They did not notice till evening that Jesus was not with them. They got very much afraid, and began looking everywhere for Jesus, but, not finding Him, they went back to Jerusalem; and it was only on the third day that they found Him in the temple, at catechism with the priests and learned doctors of the Jews, who were all astonished at His wonderful answers and questions. Mary and Joseph were very happy to find Him again. Jesus told them He had to attend to His Father's (God's) business. This is a lesson for you, children; you ought to like to go to church and learn your catechism. This is the fifth joyful mystery of the rosary.

81. What did Jesus do until He was thirty years old?

Until Jesus was thirty years old, He lived in the house of His parents, and was subject to them.

"He went down with them and came to Nazareth: and was subject to them" (Luke 2, 51). *"Jesus advanced in wisdom and age, and grace with God and men"* (Luke 2, 52).

The holy cities: Bethlehem, Nazareth and Jerusalem.

1. In countries where kings govern, the people are called subjects, that is, persons under them and bound to obey them. The head of a religious community is called the superior, and the others are the subjects. Although Jesus is God, He made Himself subject to His own creatures, to Mary and Joseph, and obeyed them more perfectly than any child can obey its parents. Jesus wished to be obedient, for men by sinning will not obey, but dis-

obey God. By His obedience He wished to do penance for our disobedience, and especially to teach children how to obey their parents and superiors. Jesus obeyed thus till He was thirty years old, that is, until He began to go about preaching the Gospel.

2. Jesus grew older every day like other children, but He did not grow more learned, for He is God and knows all things; but He appeared every day to grow more and more smart, and more and more holy. He did this to show the children how they ought to learn more and more every day and become always better and better.

3. Palestine is called the Holy Land, because Jesus went through it preaching and performing miracles. Bethlehem is called a holy city, because Jesus was born there; Nazareth also is called a holy city, because Jesus lived there so long; and Jerusalem also, because He died there. Pious people still go to visit those holy places out of love for Jesus; they are called pilgrims.

82. What did Jesus do when He was thirty years old?

When Jesus was thirty years old, He left the house of His parents, and began to teach in public.

Jesus baptized by St. John: voice from Heaven. — Fasting forty days in the desert. — The forty days of Lent.

1. Jesus led a hidden life in the house of Mary and Joseph till He was thirty years old. No one else knew that He was the Redeemer of mankind. People thought He was only a very good and holy boy and young man. When thirty years old He began to preach in public, not only in the synagogues, or Jewish churches, but also in the open air, from a boat, on the mountains. People came from all parts to hear Him. Thousands sometimes fol-

lowed Him from place to place for several days. Some followed Him everywhere; they were called His disciples, for they studied under Him, like children in a school listen to the teacher and learn. He had always twelve disciples with Him, and He called them apostles, and instructed them carefully.

2. But before beginning to preach in public, Jesus went to St. John Baptist on the river Jordan. St. John was preaching to the people to prepare them by penance for the coming of the Redeemer. He baptized those who followed his instructions; but his baptism was not the sacrament of baptism, but only a sign of washing and purifying the soul by penance, in order to become worthy to see Jesus and believe in Him. Jesus went to St. John to be baptized by him, in order to give us a good example. When He was baptized, the Holy Ghost in the form of a dove came down upon Him, and heaven opened, and the voice of God the Father was heard, saying: "Thou art My beloved Son, in Thee I am well pleased."

3. After His baptism Jesus went into a desert, that is, a place where nobody lived; there were there no houses, but only caves, mountains, and nothing to eat. He went there to pray, fast and do penance. He remained there forty days and forty nights without eating or drinking. When you are getting ready to go to confession, you try to be alone, to pray, to think over your sins, and to be sorry for them.

4. In honor of the fast of Jesus, we keep the forty days of Lent, a time of penance, during which we should fast and abstain from meat on certain days, and give up public amusements.

83. What did Jesus teach concerning Himself?

Concerning Himself Jesus taught that He is the promised Redeemer, and the Son of God.

"I and the Father are one" (John 10, 30). *"The high-priest said to Him: tell us if Thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith to him: thou hast said it"* (Matt. 26, 63, 64).

Jesus taught the people that He was the promised, long expected Redeemer; that He had come to save the world, and that all who wished to be saved must believe in Him. He taught that He is one God with the Father. (See above texts.)

84. How did Jesus prove that He is the Son of God?

Jesus proved that He is the Son of God

1) by His very holy life,
2) by many miracles,
3) by prophecies.

By His holy life, He showed that *He is the Holy One;* by His miracles, that *He is almighty;* by His prophecies (which were fulfilled), that *He knows all things.* — Thus He proved that He spoke the truth.

"Which of you shall convince Me of sin?" (John 8, 46). Even Pilate had to acknowledge: *"I find no cause in Him"* (John 19, 4).

"Though you will not believe Me, believeth the works" (that I do) (John 10, 38).

Changes water into wine; stills the tempest; raises the dead to life.

Prophecies: Treason of Judas; denial of Peter; His death and resurrection, etc.

It was not enough for Jesus to call Himself the Redeemer, the Son of God; He had to prove it. There was a man who boasted that he was stronger than anybody else. He was told to prove it, otherwise no one would believe him. He then pulled out a big tree by the roots, a thing no other man could do. Thus he proved he was the strongest of men. So our Lord not only said He was the Redeemer the Son of God, but proved it in many ways.

1. No one was ever so holy as Jesus. He never committed the least sin. His most bitter enemies tried hard to find something wrong to accuse Him

of, but they could only charge Him with what was not sinful. They persecuted Him out of mere hatred. Jesus challenged them to prove Him guilty of anything sinful. Even Pilate had to admit that he did not find Jesus guilty. He who is so holy could not be guilty of lying; He therefore told the truth.

2. Jesus performed many miracles. A miracle is something that no man, no angel, no creature can do, but which God alone can do. To restore to perfect health by a single word a person that is dying, to give sight to the blind, etc., and this without medicine, all at once and by a single word, is a miracle. Jesus among other things changed water into wine at the marriage at Cana; by a word He stilled a terrible storm on the sea; one day with only five loaves of bread and two fishes, He fed 5,000 hungry people, and all got enough, and twelve baskets full of bread were left after the meal! By a word He cured all kinds of diseases, raised to life a dead girl twelve years old, and a young man who was being carried to the grave, and Lazarus, who had been dead four days and whose body was beginning to rot and stink. Jesus could therefore say to His enemies, "though you will not believe Me, believe the works" (that I do). They proved clearly that He is God.

3. By His prophecies Jesus proved that He knew the future. and that therefore He was God, for God alone can know the future. (Describe His prophecies about the treason of Judas, Peter's denial, His own resurrection, the destruction of Jerusalem.)

Application. Often pronounce with devotion the holy name of Jesus. It is a holy, a beautiful, and a powerful name. In this name the saints performed miracles; in this name alone we can be saved. Whatsoever we ask in the name of Jesus will be granted us. "Praised be Jesus Christ — Now and forever."

1. The name of Jesus is sweet, if pronounced with devotion and love. It is holy, because it is the name of God the Son, made man. At the name of Jesus every knee should bend, says St. Paul. The priest, when saying Mass and reciting the divine office, must bow at the name of Jesus. Therefore do not pronounce it in fun or in anger; that would be a sin.

2. The name of Jesus is a lovely name. Often think how much Jesus loved us. For us He was born in a stable, for us He died on the cross. Often say: "O Jesus, I love Thee."

3. The name of Jesus is a powerful name, for in that name the apostles worked miracles. In that name alone can we be saved. In some Catholic countries the people when meeting each other say: "Praised be Jesus Christ," the answer is: "Now and forever."

Passion and Death of Christ.

Fourth Article of the Creed.

Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried.

85. In what prayer are the chief sufferings of Christ briefly mentioned?

The chief sufferings of Christ are briefly mentioned in the sorrowful mysteries of the rosary.

1) The Prayer and Blood Sweat of our Blessed Saviour in the Garden.
2) The Scourging of our Blessed Saviour at the Pillar.
3) The Crowning of our Blessed Saviour with Thorns.
4) Jesus Carrying His Cross.
5) The Crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Holy Week. Good Friday. Abstinence on all Fridays. The fourteen Stations of the Cross. The Five Wounds. Crucifix and sign of the cross. The Seven Last Words of Jesus on the Cross.

Jesus preached a little over three years. When the time appointed by His Father and foretold by Him, had come, He suffered and died for us.

1. Jesus died on Good Friday. He began to suffer on Thursday night. He took His apostles to the Garden of Olives. There He began to be sad and to fear, because He foresaw all He would have to suffer, and shrank from it, just like people shrink from and dread a very painful death. Before dying people usually have a cold sweat. Jesus had such a dread of the fearful death He was to undergo, that He got into a sweat and sweat even blood. He suffered more than all men together, because He saw all the sins of all men, of each one of us, laid upon Him; and He was to do penance for all of them. That was a terrible load He had to carry, for it pressed blood out of His veins.

2. Scourging caused a terrible pain. Jesus was stripped and tied to a pillar; strong men took large cowhides, knotted ropes with leaden balls or hooks at the end, and then struck Him with them with all their might, as long as they could strike Him; then others took their places and beat Him unmercifully till they could no longer lift up their hands; so that our Lord received hundreds, perhaps thousands of fearful blows; at every stroke His skin was torn and His blood began to flow; then His flesh itself was torn and in some places His bones could be seen, and a large pool of His blood covered the ground. There was nobody there to pity Him! Who scourged Jesus so terribly? It was our sins —sins of anger, disobedience, impurity, neglect of Mass, etc.

3. After scourging Jesus so frightfully, the soldiers wanted to have some fun. Because they had heard that Jesus claimed to be King, they took branches of long thorny bushes and platted a crown with them, and pressed it on His head, so that the

thorns went into His brain, and then they put on Him a torn dirty red cloak and a stick into His hand; then striking Him on the head they knelt before Him in mockery, saying: "Hail, King of the Jews." How terrible were the sufferings of Jesus! Jesus, so holy, so innocent, suffered all this for our sins of bad, impure thoughts, for our sins of anger, etc.

4. Pilate, although he said that Jesus was innocent, condemned Him to death, to please the Jews. Jesus had eaten no food, taken no drink for nearly eighteen hours, and had suffered the fearful scourging and crowning with thorns; He was so weak, that He could scarcely stand, and yet they forced Him to carry a cross fifteen feet long for over a mile. Through weakness and suffering He fell three times on the way; and each time the soldiers beat Him unmercifully to make Him get up. Fearing He would die on the way, they compelled a stranger passing by to help Him carry His cross. His cross was so heavy because on the cross Jesus carried all the sins of mankind, all our sins, so numerous, so wicked! We ought to be willing to carry our cross, to suffer for our own sins.

5. At last the soldiers reached Mount Calvary with Jesus; they took the cross from Him, pulled off very roughly His clothes which stuck to His wounds, and thus reopened them and made them bleed afresh. Then they threw Jesus down on the cross, drove a big nail through His right hand to nail it to the cross; then did the same to His other hand and to His feet. Oh, how painful this must have been! Just think of it! It was our sins that nailed Jesus to the cross.—Then they lifted up the cross and let it fall with a terrible shock into the hole prepared for it. How painful this was for Jesus, for it enlarged the holes in His hands and

feet and drove the thorns deeper into His head! For three long hours Jesus hung on the cross by the holes in His hands and feet, without being able to rest even His head without extreme pain. Instead of pitying Him, His enemies mocked Him, dared Him to come down from the cross. He could have done so, if He had wished; but He willed to die on it for us. Instead of praying His Father to punish His cruel enemies, He said: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they are doing." Thus He wished to teach us to forgive those who injure us. Then one of the thieves crucified at His side, repented of his sins and begged pardon for them; Jesus forgave him and promised him heaven. He next gave us to Mary as her children and made her our spiritual Mother. Then turning to His Father for consolation, but not receiving any, He exclaimed: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" To atone for sins of drunkenness, He suffered a fearful thirst, and cried out: "I thirst." Then one of the soldiers dipped a sponge in vinegar and sticking it on a stick put it to His mouth. After this, to show how He had fulfilled all that the prophets had foretold of Him, He cried out: "It is consummated;" that is, "I have suffered all I could for the sins of men." After commending His soul into the hands of His Father, He uttered a loud cry, bowed His head and died for us at three o'clock in the afternoon of Good Friday.

The Church celebrates the memory of the Passion and death of Jesus during Holy Week. Holy Week begins on Palm-Sunday by the blessing and procession of palms, to honor the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem a few days before His death. On Holy Thursday the church celebrates the washing of the feet of His apostles by our Lord, and the institution of the Blessed Eucharist. On Good Friday she celebrates the sufferings and death

of Jesus; there is no Mass on that day. Because Jesus died for us on a Friday, the Church prescribes abstinence from flesh meat on Fridays, so that we also may do some penance for our sins.

When you look at the side walls of the church, you see fourteen pictures, called the fourteen Stations of the Cross; they are put up there in honor of the way followed by Jesus carrying His cross, when He went to die for us. Good Christians used to go to Jerusalem to pray at all the places where Jesus suffered and carried His cross and died for us. But as the majority of good people who would wish to do this, are not able to travel so far, the Church permits a representation of the way Jesus Christ followed to die for us; it is called the Way of the Cross, and consists of fourteen Stations.

Station I. Jesus is condemned to death.
" II. Jesus takes up His cross.
" III. Jesus falls the first time under His cross.
" IV. Jesus meets His sorrowful Mother.
" V. Simon of Cyrene is compelled to help Jesus to carry the cross.
" VI. Veronica gives Jesus a towel to wipe His face.
" VII. Jesus falls a second time under His cross.
" VIII. Jesus speaks to the weeping women.
" IX. Jesus falls the third time under His cross.
" X. Jesus is stripped of His garments.
" XI. Jesus is nailed to the cross.
" XII. Jesus dies on the cross.
" XIII. The body of Jesus is taken down from the cross and laid in His Mother's arms.
" XIV. Jesus is placed in the sepulchre.

The holy Five Wounds of Jesus.—They are the wounds in His hands and feet made by the nails driven through them, and the hole in His side and heart made after His death by the spear of the soldier, who wished to show that Jesus was really dead. When the spear opened the heart of Jesus which loved us so much, there flowed out a few drops of blood and water, so that there was not a drop of blood left in the body of Jesus, for He shed it *all* for us. We should revere His five wounds and say in their honor five Our Fathers, five Hail Marys and five Glory be to the Father.

The crucifix and the sign of the cross. The crucifix is an image of Jesus hanging on the cross; there should be a crucifix in every house, and even in every room. It tells us how much Jesus loved us and suffered for us, how much our soul is worth. Who can tell what I said some time ago about the sign of the cross?

At the death of Jesus there were frightful signs. The sun grew dark; it became like night; there was a terrible earthquake; big rocks split, and everything looked so frightful that even the soldiers could not help saying: "Truly this was the Son of God."

86. Who condemned Jesus to death?

The Roman governor Pontius Pilate condemned Jesus to death.

The Romans had conquered the Jews and sent Pilate, a bad man, to govern them. The enemies of Jesus had not the power to put Jesus to death, but brought Him to Pilate to judge and condemn Him. Pilate tried Jesus and declared Him innocent, and yet for fear of the Jews he condemned Jesus to be scourged and crucified. What a crime! Learn from this never to yield to human respect, never to do evil for fear of men.

87. What means: Jesus died?

Jesus died means: His holy soul separated from the body.

Good Friday. Mount Calvary.

As the soul leaves the body of every man when he dies, so also did the soul of Jesus leave His body when He died. Calvary means a place of skulls, for it looked like a skull. Probably Adam had been buried there, and his skull lay just where the cross of Jesus stood.

88. Was Jesus compelled to suffer and to die?

Jesus was not compelled to suffer and to die; He suffered and died of His own free will.

"He was offered, because it was His own will (Is. 53, 7).

89. Why did Jesus suffer and die?

Jesus suffered and died in order to redeem us.

Jesus was not obliged to suffer and die.—A bad boy is not willing to go to school if he knows that a punishment awaits him there. But he has to go, if his father takes him by the hand and compels him to go there; he is punished against his will, for he cannot help it.—Not so with Jesus. The Jews arrested Him, and brought Him to court. Was He obliged to go? No; for He could have freed Himself, if he had so willed it. His enemies had previously endeavored many a time to arrest Him, and to do Him harm, but they could not, for He would not let them, because His own chosen time had not yet come. When it came, He freely gave Himself up to them, and let them do with Him what they would. "He was offered because it was His own will." It was He who gave strength to those who made Him suffer. Jesus then freely sacrificed Himself for our salvation, for He had come into the world for this purpose.

Jesus satisfied for our sins.—When you owe a debt, you satisfy for it by paying it all. He who steals, satisfies for his theft when he restores what he has stolen. He who hurts or offends another, satisfies for his offence by apologizing or doing good to him whom he has hurt or offended.—We had most grievously offended God by our sins, and could not satisfy for our sins; hence Jesus undertook to satisfy for our sins, and He did and suffered enough to satisfy for all the sins of all men, and for even 1,000,000 times more. By His sufferings and death He reconciled us with His Father.

90. From what did Jesus redeem us?

Jesus redeemed us from sin and hell.

"Behold the Lamb of God, behold Him Who taketh away the sins of the world" (John 1, 29).

All men were bound by the chains of sin, and could not go to heaven. Jesus freed them from sin by taking their sins upon Himself and by dying for us. He thus obtained for them God's forgiveness. St. John Baptist pointed Him out, saying: "Behold the Lamb of God." Why does he call Jesus a lamb? The paschal Lamb once saved the Jews; and Jesus is like the lamb they used to kill at Easter. A lamb is white and pure. Jesus is the purest and holiest of men. A lamb is patient; Jesus suffered patiently, and suffered Himself to be nailed to the cross, in order to free us from the eternal torments of hell which we deserved for our sins.

91. What did Jesus merit for us?

Jesus merited for us grace and eternal salvation.

It was not enough for Jesus to take away our

sins and the eternal punishment of hell, we need something more to go to heaven. We must be holy to enter it. Jesus by His death deserved for us sanctifying grace, which makes us holy and fit for heaven. Adam had lost it for himself and for all men. By shedding His blood, Jesus recovered it for us and bought heaven for us, which had been closed by Adam's sin.

92. For whom did Jesus die?

Jesus died for all mankind.

"Christ died for all" (II. Cor. 5, 15).

1. Jesus died for all men who had lived before His coming, for all then living and for all who were to live on earth, hence also for each one of us. He thought of every one of us in particular, and died for every one.

2. But not all men go to heaven. Why? This is a sad truth, but it is not the fault of Jesus, for He died for all men; He merited grace for all men to gain heaven. But He does not force people to be saved against their will. Those who do not strive hard to go to heaven, do not really wish to go there. Suppose a rich man would put enough money in a bank to give each boy and girl here $100,000, and would say that those who wish to get the money should first come to him and get a note, and then bring it to the bank. Now suppose some of you were too lazy to do this, saying it is too much trouble to come and ask him for a note, and then to go with it to the bank. Whose fault would it be if they would not get their share of the money? Would it be his fault? No; but it would be all theirs. Now God demands of us *prayer and good works,* that we may merit heaven; and these are in every one's power. Therefore no one is damned except through his own fault.

3. Sin is like a disease. Jesus on the cross gave us medicine to cure it.—There is an epidemic, let us suppose, in a large city; all attacked by it die, because there is no remedy known to cure it. A strange, skilful doctor comes and says: "I have an unfailing remedy which will cure all who will use it." Does that stop the epidemic or cure those who have the disease? No; people must get the remedy and take it; if they do not, they will die in spite of the doctor and his medicine. This earth is the city and sin is the epidemic, and Jesus is the skilful doctor. The medicine He offers was prepared on the cross; it consists 1) of faith, 2) keeping the commandments, 3) receiving the sacraments and 4) prayer. Those who will not use this medicine shall be lost, and this through their own fault.

93. What was done with the body of Jesus after death?

After death, the body of Jesus was taken down from the cross and laid in the grave.

Jesus really died on the cross. When He was already dead, the soldier Longinus took a lance and with it pierced Jesus' side and cut His heart open, and there flowed from it some blood and water. Thus Jesus shed all His blood for us. Joseph of Arimathea, a rich and noble man, a disciple of Jesus, then went to Pilate and begged for the body of Jesus to bury it. Pilate granted it. Joseph took the body of Jesus down from the cross and laid it in the arms of Mary. This is the thirteenth station. How Mary grieved and wept to see Jesus dead, covered with wounds and blood! She thus became truly the Mother of Sorrows.—Then Joseph and other pious men laid the body of Jesus in a sepulchre, or grave, hewn out of a big rock—

the grave which Joseph had prepared for himself. Then they rolled a very large stone at the mouth, or entrance, of the grave.

Application. Frequently think of Jesus crucified. Had He not died, you would have been eternally lost. So great was the love of your Redeemer! So great is the value of your soul, that the Son of God died in order to redeem it!

Look often at the crucifix and think how much Jesus loved you and suffered for you. Thank Him for His great love; for had He not died for you, you would be lost forever in hell. The crucifix tells you how much Jesus loved you; love Him in return with your whole heart. Ask Him to forgive you your sins, which made Him suffer so much. The crucifix tells you also that your soul is worth the blood of God, for it cost Jesus all His blood to redeem it and save it from hell. Therefore hate sin and love Jesus Christ. Be ready to suffer all, even to die, rather than offend God, rather than lose your soul which cost Jesus so much.

Christ's Resurrection.

Fifth Article of the Creed.

He descended into hell, the third day He arose again from the dead.

94. Where did the soul of Christ go after death?

After death, the soul of Christ descended into Limbo.

95. Who were in Limbo?

In Limbo were the souls of the just who died before Christ.

Adam and Eve (holy penitents), Abel, Noe, Abraham, Joseph, David. John the Baptist. St. Joseph. — They awaited the redemption. Heaven was closed.

96. How long did the soul of Christ remain in Limbo?

The soul of Christ remained in Limbo until the third day.

The afternoon of Good Friday, the first day — Holy Saturday the second day — the morning of Easter Sunday, the third day.

1. After the soul of Jesus had left His body, it descended, not into the hell of the damned, but into the lower regions, or Limbo—called hell in old English. In the hell of the damned the sufferings are terrible and everlasting. But in Limbo there was no suffering; the souls of the holy men who had died before Christ awaited most eagerly His coming, because heaven had been closed against all mankind by the sin of our first parents, and could be opened again only by Jesus after He had died for our sins. There the soul of Jesus appeared to Adam and Eve, Noe, Abraham and the just, some of whom had waited and longed thousands of years for the happy day when the Redeemer would come to them. How glad they were to see and welcome Jesus, to honor and thank Him!

2. The soul of Jesus remained in Limbo conversing with and cheering those holy souls from three o'clock Friday afternoon till early dawn of Sunday morning. Although it was hardly more than one day and a half, the Jews, in their manner of counting, called it three days.

97. Where did the soul of Christ return on the third day?

On the third day, the soul of Christ returned to His body and was re-united to it.

98. What happened when Christ re-united His soul to His body?

When Christ re-united His soul to His body, He arose glorious from the dead.

First glorious mystery of the rosary: "The Resurrection of our Lord from the dead."
Easter. Alleluia! Paschal candle.

The soul of Jesus returned to His body and made it alive again at early dawn on Easter Sunday morning. Jesus Christ, when dead, raised Himself to life again by His own power, as He had foretold. Thus He proved clearly that He is God. Although His body was still the same, it now appeared far unlike what it was when laid in the grave. Then it was disfigured and covered with wounds; now it was beautiful, bright, glorious, with no wounds, but only the marks of the nails in His hands and feet, and of the lance in His side. His body was transfigured and left the grave without removing the stone. An angel came and removed it, to show that the tomb was empty. The rising of Jesus from the dead proves that He is God. It is a glorious feast in the Church, and is celebrated on Easter Sunday by hymns of joy, by the Alleluia—let us rejoice. The Easter or Paschal candle blessed on Holy Saturday, represents Jesus risen and glorious, the five grains of incense forming a cross on it, represent the five wounds of our Lord. The candle is lighted at all the high Masses until the Gospel of the feast of the Ascension, which tells of Jesus ascending to heaven.

99. How long did Christ remain on earth after His resurrection?

After His resurrection Christ remained on earth forty days.

He often appeared to His Apostles; He ate and drank with them and spoke to them. St. Thomas was permitted to touch His wounds. — He gave His Apostles instructions and certain powers for the government of the Church.

1. Jesus did not go to heaven immediately after rising from the dead, but remained forty days on earth; He did not remain in one place, but showed Himself to His apostles in different places; sometimes He came to them through closed doors. At first they were much frightened, because they thought it was a ghost; but He told them to feel Him, and not only spoke to them, but also ate before them. And as to St. Thomas, who would not believe that He was truly risen, He made him put his finger into the wounds of His hands, and his hand into the wound of His side. Jesus appeared first to His Mother, who loved Him most and suffered most for Him; then to St. Peter, to St. Mary Magdalen; at one time to 500 persons at once. So there could be no mistake about His being risen.

2. Besides proving He was really risen, Jesus finished instructing His apostles and prepared them to found the Church. He appointed Peter as His Vicar on earth, and empowered him and his successors to govern the Church. He empowered the Church to preach, baptize, forgive sins and confer all the sacraments.

Application. God alone could raise Himself from the dead to life. This is the greatest miracle and the strongest proof that Christ is God. As Christ rose from the dead, so we also shall rise on the last day, glorious and transfigured, if we have lived with Christ.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ was His greatest miracle. Jesus had really died; He had shed all His blood and His heart was cut in twain. God

may give to man the power to raise other men to life; but only God can raise Himself to life. Jesus had several times clearly foretold that He would raise Himself to life after His death; and He actually fulfilled His prophecy. He is therefore God; and therefore also He preached the truth, and we must believe what He preached to us Himself and through His apostles and His Church. The resurrection of Jesus is, moreover, a pledge that we also shall one day rise again from the dead, because Jesus wishes us to be forever with Him in heaven in soul and in body. But only those will rise gloriously who lived like Jesus, who were good and kept the commandments. The wicked will rise again, but not gloriously to enjoy heaven, but to suffer in both body and soul the endless torments of hell.

Ascension of Christ.

Sixth Article of the Creed.

He ascended into Heaven; sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty.

100. What did Jesus do on the fortieth day after His resurrection?

On the fortieth day after His resurrection, Jesus ascended into Heaven.

Second glorious mystery of the rosary: "The Ascension of Christ into Heaven." Feast of the Ascension of our Lord. — 40 days after Easter.

Forty days after His resurrection, Jesus went out of Jerusalem, accompanied by His apostles, to the Mount of Olives. There He spoke to them and to the other disciples present for the last time with Him on earth. Then He blessed them and in the

presence of them all, 120 in number, He went up to heaven. All looked up as long as they could see Him, and a cloud hid Him from view. Then two angels in white came to console them, and to tell them that the same Jesus would, at the end of the world, come down again from heaven. Jesus ascended to heaven by His own power; this proves that He is God. The Ascension is the second glorious mystery of the rosary.

101. From what place did Christ ascend into Heaven?

Christ ascended into Heaven from Mount Olivet.

He had also begun His sufferings on Mount Olivet.
The holy mountains: Mt. Sinai, Mt. of the Eight Beatitudes, Mt. Thabor, Mt. Olivet, Mt. Calvary.

By ascending into heaven from Mt. Olivet where He began His Passion, Jesus wished to teach us that to deserve heaven we must, for His sake, suffer and labor as He did.

The holy mountains are: 1) Mount Sinai, where God gave the ten commandments to the Israelites; 2) the Mt. of Eight Beatitudes, where Jesus preached on what we should do to go to heaven, saying: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven;" 3) Mt. Thabor, where Christ showed Himself gloriously transfigured to three of His apostles; 4) Mt. Olivet; 5) and Mt. Calvary, on which He died for us.

102. How did Jesus ascend into Heaven?

Jesus ascended into Heaven by His own power, with body and soul.

Ascended glorious, as He rose from the dead, and will ever remain. He took with Him the souls from Limbo.

Christ's ascension into heaven proves that He is God, for no creature can do so by its own power.

Mary also is in heaven with both body and soul, but she was taken up to heaven, not by her own power, but by the power of God. Jesus ascended, but Mary was assumed, that is, taken up. Jesus came down from Heaven as God only, but He returned to Heaven as God and man, with body and soul. When He ascended He took along all the souls of the holy men that had died until then, and thus opened heaven again to men.

103. What does Jesus do for us in Heaven?

In Heaven Jesus intercedes for us, and prepares for us a dwelling place.

As God-Man and Redeemer, He continues in Heaven to be our Mediator. He is *"the Priest, always living to make intercession for us"* (Heb. 7, 25). *"In My Father's house there are many mansions,...I (now) go to prepare a place for you"* (John 14, 2).

1. In heaven Jesus is still our Redeemer. He intercedes for us, as St. Paul says, prays for us, even if we do not ourselves pray. When we pray, He offers our prayers to His Father. He prays for sinners, showing His wounds that cry for mercy for them, as if He said: "See, Father, how I suffered; let not those perish for whom I died." He is our Mediator, that is, He stands between His Father and us. Comparison.—Suppose a ladder; one person is at the top, another at the bottom, and a third in the middle. The one on top gives something to the one below through the one in the middle; also, the one below hands something to the one on top through the same. In like manner, God gives us everything through Jesus Christ, because He died for us; all our prayers and offerings reach God through Jesus Christ.

2. Jesus prepares a place for all the good in heaven, to each one according to his merit. Let us endeavor to deserve a very high one.

104. What means: "sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father?"

'Sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father,' means: that Jesus lives and reigns with God the Father in union with the Holy Ghost forever and ever.

Sitting here means governing. Jesus is at the right, that is, the honorable place, and is equal in power with the Father and the Holy Ghost. Most of the Church prayers end with "Through our Lord, Jesus Christ."

Application. Often raise your eyes and heart to Heaven and say: There, above the stars, is my real, eternal home. Christ Himself has prepared a dwelling for me there. I will live so as not to lose it through my fault. Sursum corda!

Often look up to heaven, the house of your Father—the place acquired for you by Jesus, and destined for you as your home for all eternity. There all will be joy and happiness, no suffering, no sorrow, no pain. Take care not to lose your right to heaven by committing mortal sin, for it alone can prevent you from ever reaching heaven. Flee sin, therefore, more than all evils. Jesus has prepared there a place for each of you. Strive to deserve it; be obedient, study well; keep from bad company; pray, especially in temptation. Desire heaven with all your might, and be determined to go to heaven at any cost.

Second Coming of Christ.

Seventh Article of the Creed.

From thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.

105. When will Christ come again?

Christ will come again at the end of the world.

"This Jesus Who is taken up from you into Heaven, shall so come as you have seen Him going into Heaven" (Acts 1, 11).

106. How will Christ come again?

Christ will come again with great power and majesty.

First and second advent = coming.

When Jesus, ascending to heaven, had disappeared behind a cloud, two angels appeared to the apostles and said: (Acts 1, 11). When will that be? At the end of the world, that is, when all men shall have died, and no more shall be born. How will He come? As He went up, that is, glorious and mighty. The first time He came upon earth as an Infant, in poverty and humility, to die for us. But not so the second time.

107. Why will Christ come again?

Christ will come again to judge all men, the good and the wicked.

At the end of the world all men will be dead. But then God will raise them up again, and they will come together to be publicly judged; to give an account of the profit they derived from the passion and death of Jesus. The good will hear from the lips of Jesus these words: "Come with Me to heaven." The wicked will be told by Jesus:

"Away with you to hell forever." This is what is meant by—"judge the living," that is the good, "and the dead," that is the wicked.

Application. The same Saviour Who came into the world as a poor infant to redeem us, will come again with divine majesty to judge us. Follow your Redeemer, that He may one day be to you a merciful Judge.

If you wish to obtain mercy on that day, avoid sin; keep the commandments.

The Holy Ghost.

Eighth Article of the Creed.

I believe in the Holy Ghost.

108. Who is the Holy Ghost?

The Holy Ghost is the third person of the Blessed Trinity, equal to the Father and to the Son.

Jesus commanded His apostles to baptize "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." In making the sign of the cross, we say also: "In the name," etc. The Doxology: "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost," etc. When we mention the Father and the Son, we always add Holy Ghost, for the Holy Ghost is one God with the Father and the Son. As the Son comes from the Father, so the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son. He is God, distinct from the Father and the Son, but equal to them in all things. He must be honored and adored as God.

109. Who sent the Holy Ghost down from Heaven?

Jesus Christ sent the Holy Ghost down from Heaven.

Third glorious mystery of the rosary: "The Descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles."

Pentecost. Ten days after the Ascension of our Lord.

On Pentecost, the Holy Ghost appeared in the form of fiery tongues; at the baptism of Christ, in the form of a dove.

Pentecost = fiftieth day (after Easter).

1. Jesus had promised His apostles that He would, after leaving them, send them the Holy Ghost. After they had seen Him ascending to heaven, they all went to the house where the Last Supper had taken place. There they spent ten days in retreat, praying and fasting. On the morning of Pentecost they were assembled together with Mary; a great wind came down from heaven upon the house and made a great noise. And the Holy Ghost came down upon the apostles in the form of fiery tongues; and the apostles were filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak in tongues, or languages, till then unknown to them. As Pentecost was one of the great feasts of the Jews, because on that day God had given them their law through Moses, on Mount Sinai, there were at Jerusalem hundreds of thousands of Jews from every country of the world. At the noise made by the whirlwind, thousands of them gathered around the house where the apostles were. The apostles then came out and began to preach the Gospel, and each one understood them in his own language, although they spoke only in one.

2. Why did the Holy Ghost come in the form of fiery tongues? The tongue is the organ of speech. The Holy Ghost wished to teach the apostles how to speak, how to preach the Gospel

as Jesus had done. And as they had to do so all over the world, and had not the time to learn the different languages, He enabled them to speak all languages without previous study. Fire gives light and warmth. The apostles were not very smart men; even after hearing Jesus preach for three years they understood but little of what He had taught them. The Holy Ghost came to enlighten them, so that they might remember and understand what Jesus had taught them, and thus preach it to mankind. The apostles were also cowardly. When Jesus was arrested, they all ran away; and Peter, the most brave of them, shamefully denied our Lord. And even after His resurrection they were so afraid in Jerusalem that they always kept the house they were in well locked for fear of the Jews. But to preach the Gospel and endure persecution, torments and death, they needed plenty of strength and courage. Hence the Holy Ghost, in the form of fiery tongues, enlightened and warmed them up, that is, gave them courage and zeal. They, and especially St. Peter, preached with so much zeal and courage already on Pentecost, that at St. Peter's first sermon three thousand Jews were converted and baptized.

Pentecost is a Greek word, meaning fiftieth. Pentecost or Whitsunday is the seventh Sunday after Easter, and is the great feast day commemorating the foundation of the Church.

110. Why did Christ send the Holy Ghost?

Christ sent the Holy Ghost that He might distribute the graces which Christ had merited for us on the cross.

Jesus Christ deserved graces to save all men, and even a million times more. Each man may then get all the graces he needs. The Holy Ghost

distributes them. Thus the three divine Persons all have a part in the Redemption. The Father sent the Son, the Son suffered and died for us; the Holy Ghost makes us holy and deserving of Heaven.

111. Through whom does the Holy Ghost distribute these graces?

The Holy Ghost distributes these graces through the Church.

The Holy Ghost does not distribute grace directly, but indirectly through the Church. By the Church is not meant the building destined for God's service, but especially the Pope, the bishops and priests. St. Peter was the first Pope; the apostles were the first bishops.

112. What does the Holy Ghost do in the Church?

The Holy Ghost assists the Church

1) to teach infallibly the doctrine of Christ,
2) to make good laws,
3) to sanctify man by means of the sacraments.

"But when He, the spirit of truth, is come, He will teach you all truth" (John 16, 13).

1. The Church, as you will learn later, was instituted to teach Christ's doctrine. That doctrine is true and sure. The Holy Ghost so assists the Church in this, that she cannot make a mistake. With His help she will always teach the truth, the genuine doctrine of Christ, without mistake or error; this is what infallibility means. (See above John 16, 13.)

2. The members of the Church are numerous and scattered all over the world. Where there are many people, laws are needed to keep all in order.

But laws ought to be good and just, that is, not contrary to God's law; they should also be useful, and not too easy nor too hard. The Holy Ghost helps the Church to make all the laws that are necessary, and to make good laws; for instance, the precepts of the Church.

3. The Church has received from the Holy Ghost all the graces and helps men need to fulfil the commandments and gain heaven. She imparts sanctifying grace in baptism and in the sacrament of penance, and an increase of it in the other sacraments. For instance, before baptism the child's soul is stained with original sin. When the water is poured on it and the necessary words are pronounced at baptism, original sin is taken away from it, and it becomes a child of God and a member of the Church. The water touched only the body, but the Holy Ghost washed and sanctified the soul.

Application. All sanctity comes from the Holy Ghost. He sanctified you also by His grace, and made your soul His temple. Do not expel Him from this temple by sin.

Everything holy on earth comes from the Holy Ghost. All merit for heaven is made meritorious by the Holy Ghost. He sanctified the Blessed Virgin and all the saints in heaven. He made us holy in baptism; He dwells in the soul of everyone that is in the state of grace. Our soul is the temple of the Holy Ghost. When we are in a church we should pray, for our Lord dwells there. We should then pray often in our heart, for the Holy Ghost is there. The Church should always be clean and adorned; we should then always keep from sin, go to confession, if we have sinned, and adorn our soul with good works, which are in our soul like beautiful flowers on the altar. Do not drive the Holy Ghost out of your soul by mortal sin and put the devil in His place.

The Church.

Ninth Article of the Creed.

I. The Holy Catholic Church.

113. Who belongs to the Church?

Everyone who is baptized and who believes all that God has revealed, belongs to the Church.

The word church may have two meanings, like the word school. When you say: "I am going into the church;" or "there are three altars in our church," you mean the building where divine service is held. But that is not what the word church means in the Creed. It means a society of men. In like manner school may have two meanings—the school building and the children and teachers that compose or make up the school.

To belong to the Church it is required to be and do like the other members, to have the same qualities and perform the same acts. To be a member of the Church, one must believe all that God has revealed, besides being baptized. Little children are baptized, but cannot yet believe, for they cannot yet understand anything, but they have the power to understand, they have reason, though they cannot use it; so they have the power to believe. They receive faith at baptism, just as they received reason from God when He made them. When they grow and will not believe, they are no longer members of the Church. Thus unbelievers and heretics, though baptized, do not belong to the Church, for they do not believe. (Ask questions as to who belongs to the Church.) Imagine you see a large field; on a height in the middle you see the Pope; around him the bishops; around the bishops, the priests, and around them

over two hundred million of lay people. That is the Church.

114. Who founded the Church?

Jesus Christ founded the Church.

115. How did Christ found the Church?

Christ founded the Church by giving her rulers to govern, and by commanding all men to obey them.

Clergy and *laity.*

Example: A school consists of teacher *and* pupils. Superiors and subjects. — The Church a *society,* having a *president* and inferior officers (Pope, Bishops, and Priests). *Laws = Commandments of the Church. Initiation* by baptism. Its members are called Catholics.

Christ not only founded the Church, but also designated who should belong to it. He first appointed superiors to rule and direct all that should be done. Your parents are the superiors at home, the teacher, in the school, the priest, in the parish. Christ designated some—the apostles—to be superiors, and commanded all the rest to obey them. He did this before He ascended to heaven. But the Church was still lifeless, like Adam's body before God breathed into it a soul to give it life. The soul of the Church is the Holy Ghost, who came down on the Church on Pentecost and gave her life. On that day three thousand persons believed and were baptized, and then the Church was established on earth.

There are two classes of persons in the Church: Those who are ordained and have received special spiritual powers from God called the clergy, consisting of the Pope, bishops and priests. All the rest, not being ordained, but who are only baptized and believe, are simply called the faithful or laity. (Ask questions on this subject.)

Example: The Church is like a school. In a school there are the teachers and the pupils; neither alone form the school; but the school consists of both together. So in the Church, neither the clergy alone, nor the laity alone make up the Church, but both are required. The one teaches, and the other hears and believes.—The Church is also like a society, yea, she is a real society, the largest of all societies. Many persons form a society; you have heard of, or know some, v. g.—To belong to a society, one must be a member of it. Every society has a president to govern it. In the Church the Pope is the head and governs the whole Church. The Church is spread over the whole earth; many cities have a president or special head, called bishop, and each church or parish has one also, called the pastor or the priest.

He who wishes to join a society, must first be admitted as a member. So to join the Church, one must first be baptized. Before being admitted into a society, one must first promise to do all that is required of the members. So in the Church he who wishes to be baptized and become a member, must make the vows of baptism. He who joins a society, gets a sign or badge. In the Church baptism impresses on the soul an indelible mark or sign. A society has laws, statutes, or regulations which the members are bound to observe. The Church has also her precepts, which all her members are bound to obey. A society has a place of meeting for the members. Every parish has a parish church. A society has certain meeting days. The Church has Sundays and holydays of obligation. The Church is the largest of societies, for she extends over the whole world, and is, therefore, universal or catholic, and her members are called Catholics. We are all Catholics.

116. Whom did Jesus appoint as rulers of the Church?

Jesus appointed the Apostles as rulers of the Church.

The names of the apostles were: Sts. Peter, Andrew, James, John, Thomas, James the Less, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Simon and Jude Thaddeus. Judas Iscariot was at first one of them; he betrayed Jesus and afterward hanged himself. St. Matthias was chosen in his stead. Later St. Paul became an apostle. To the apostles Jesus gave the power to teach men, to administer the sacraments, to rule the Church, saying: "He that heareth you heareth Me."

117. Whom did Jesus appoint as head of the Church?

Jesus appointed St. Peter as head of the Church.

118. What did Jesus say, when He appointed St. Peter as head of the Church?

When appointing St. Peter as head of the Church, Jesus said:

1) "Thou art Peter (rock), and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16, 18).

2) "I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of Heaven. Whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in Heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in Heaven" (Matt. 16, 19).

3) "Feed My lambs, feed My sheep" (John 21, 15-17).

1) and 2) Words *of promise;* 3) words *of appointment.*

1. The apostles themselves had to have some one to govern them, to tell each one what he should do, where he should go to preach the Gospel. Jesus appointed St. Peter as their head to govern them. The head is the highest part of the body; hence he who is over others, is called their head. The father is the head of the family. Jesus placed St. Peter as the head of the apostles. One day Jesus asked His apostles: "Who do you think I am?" St. Peter replied: "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus then said to him: (Mat. 16, 18—as above given). Peter means rock. Jesus wished to build His Church. You remember what Church here means—not a material building —although Jesus compares it to a house. A house, to be strong and lasting, needs a firm foundation, otherwise it will sink and be full of cracks, and will finally fall to pieces. (Explain how a house is built—foundation, walls, etc.). A house that has a rock for a foundation, is the strongest and most lasting. Jesus said to St. Peter that he was a big rock, and would be the strong, safe and lasting foundation of the Church, which He would build for the whole world; on Peter that grand institution should rest safely and last forever. He said that the devil would hate the Church and try to destroy it, to pull it down, to throw it down, to break it up, but would never succeed. The gates of hell means the powers of hell, the wicked angels, devils, and wicked men. Formerly cities had walls all around them, and the gates were made as strong as possible, so that the enemies could not break them down and get into the city.

2. The kingdom of heaven means often the Church; for he who is a good member of the Church, can reach heaven. The Church is God's kingdom on earth. Jesus promised to give the

keys of it to St. Peter; they were not real keys of brass or iron. When a builder has finished building a house, he hands the keys of it to the owner; and the owner may go in and do what he likes in that house; the keys given him show that he is master in the house. Jesus promised to give to St. Peter the keys of the Church, to show that St. Peter was to be the head of the Church. (See above Matt. 16, 19). Among the Jews to bind and to loose meant to do as one deemed proper. Hence by saying this to St. Peter, Jesus wished to give to St. Peter the power to command and make laws in the Church and to dispense from them; and Jesus promised to approve in heaven what St. Peter would do in the Church on earth. Thus He promised to give St. Peter the highest power in the Church.

3. What Jesus then promised to St. Peter, He fulfilled after His resurrection, when He twice asked St. Peter: "Dost thou love Me?" St. Peter replied each time: "Lord, thou knowest that I love Thee;" and each time Jesus added: "Feed My lambs." A third time Jesus asked St. Peter: "Dost thou love Me?" And St. Peter said: "Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee." Then Jesus said: "Feed My sheep." What did all this mean? Jesus meant to say to St. Peter: "If you really love Me, as you say, you must love also all that I love. I have a big flock I love very much, since I died to save it. You must also love it very much; you must take My place, for I am going away; you must feed My flock; you must be My vicar on earth, in My Church." Jesus calls those who believe in Him, who belong to His Church, His flock, for He often called Himself the Good Shepherd who gives His life for His sheep. Now when Jesus

entrusted His flock to St. Peter, He did not give him real lambs and sheep, but the faithful as the lambs and the clergy as the sheep of His flock, that Peter might care for all, govern all, and thus be the Head of the Church, the first Pope.

119. Who is the successor of St. Peter?

The successor of St. Peter is the Pope, the Bishop of Rome.

Present Pope: Pius X. Title: Holy Father, Vicar of Christ.

1. St. Peter was head of the Church for over 34 years. The Church is to last till the end of the world, and needed after St. Peter's death, a head, even more so than after Christ's Ascension. When a President dies, or His term of office is over, another President takes his place. So it is in the Church. The successor of St. Peter is Bishop of Rome, and is usually called the Pope. St. Peter was a bishop, the supreme bishop. A bishop has a see, a diocese which he governs. Rome was St. Peter's see for over 25 years. From Rome he governed the Church. After his death, the Roman clergy and the neighboring bishops met and elected his successor; when he died, there was another similar election.

2. St. Peter was the first Pope; his successors were Sts. Linus, Cletus, Clement, etc. The present Pope, Pius X., is the 264th Pope. He was elected August 4th, 1903. His name was Joseph Sarto, but he took the name of Pius, because it is customary for those elected as successors of St. Peter to take a new name, just as St. Peter, by order of our Lord, changed his name from Simon to Peter. The Pope is also called Holy Father, His Holiness. Jesus called Peter "blessed" already during his lifetime. The Pope is called Holy Father, because he

is the father of a holy family—the Church; he rules in holy things—doctrine and the sacraments. He is also the Vicar of Christ, and is called also Sovereign Pontiff, that is, highest bishop. The dignity of Pope is the very highest on earth, the greatest in authority. What he says and does, as Pope, Jesus approves in heaven. Therefore let us honor him; he is our father, let us pray for him, and contribute to his support.—Meaning of Peter's pence. —The Pope lives in Rome, Italy, at the Vatican, near St. Peter's Church, the largest and grandest in the world, where are the grave and body of St. Peter. When the Pope enters St. Peter's Church, the choir sings: "Thou art Peter, and on this rock," etc. (Mat. 16, 18.)

120. Who are the successors of the Apostles?

The successors of the Apostles are the Bishops.

Archbishops, Bishops. Dioceses. About 1000. — Provinces. — Councils, Ecumenical, Plenary, Provincial.

The other apostles, as well as St. Peter, had successors. Ususally the apostles appointed their own successors, for instance—St. Paul preached in Crete, and was its first bishop; but as he had to preach elsewhere, he did not stay long, but ordained priests and consecrated St. Titus bishop and made him his successor in Crete. When the bishops died, others were elected in their places according to the rules laid down by the Apostles. The country, or part of a country, over which a bishop is placed, is called a diocese. There are over 1,000 dioceses in the world. Some bishops are called archbishops, because they are over a certain number of bishops; and the dioceses of these bishops with that of the archbishop form an ecclesiastical province.

Bishops sometimes meet together to settle cer-

tain matters relating to the spiritual wants of their people, and their meeting is called a council. When the Pope calls all the bishops of the world to meet, the council is called ecumenical, or general council. At the last general council, called the Vatican, which was held in 1869 and 1870, there were over 750 bishops present. When all the bishops of a country meet in council, it is called a plenary council. When only the bishops of an ecclesiastical province meet, it is called a provincial council. When the bishop calls together the priests of his diocese, it is called a synod. Ecumenical councils make laws for the whole Church, plenary councils for a whole nation, provincial councils for a province, and synods for a diocese.

121. Who are the assistants of the Bishops?

The assistants of the Bishops are the Priests.

Pastors, Curates, Assistant Priests.

The (70) Cardinals elect the Pope. The Pope appoints the Bishops, the Bishops appoint the Pastors.

A bishop's duty is to care for all the souls in his diocese by preaching, baptizing and administering the other sacraments. But he cannot be everywhere at once and do all this himself; some dioceses are very large, having hundreds of Churches and even millions of Catholics. To help them, bishops ordain as priests some pious and learned men, and send them as pastors to the different parishes, each of which has its own territory. The baptisms, marriages, last sacraments, funerals of people living in a parish must be attended to by the pastor, as well as the first holy Communion of the children. No priest may exercise the office of pastor or assistant pastor, unless sent by the bishop. When a parish is large, the pastor is helped by other priests, called curates, or assistant priests. All these

act in the name of the bishop, with powers given them by the bishop. Everything in the Church is most beautifully ordered. The faithful follow their pastors or priests, the priests follow their bishops, and the bishops follow the Pope, the Vicar of Christ.

The cardinals are good, learned and able clergymen chosen by the Pope as his counsellors; they are next to the Pope in governing the Church; their number should never exceed 70. When a Pope dies, they elect his successor by a two-thirds vote. The Pope chooses the bishops and assigns their dioceses and gives them the power to govern them. In the United States when a bishop dies, the principal priests of the diocese meet, and choose three clergymen as worthy to succeed the deceased bishop, and then the bishops of the province meet and either approve the choice of the priests, or choose others in their place, and the whole proceeding is sent to the Pope who usually chooses from among the list or lists sent him, the new bishop.

122. What means: the Church is One?

The Church is One, means: all Catholics have the same doctrine, the same sacraments, and are under the same head.

The Church could not exist if she were not one. In fact, no society can long continue, if every one in it is allowed to do just as he likes, for this would cause confusion and trouble.

1. All Catholics have the same belief; what one believes, all believe. The faith is the same in America as in Europe, etc. If you go to China and meet a Catholic there, you know exactly what he believes; his faith is the same as yours. The Catholic catechism, in whatever language it may be, always teaches the same truths. Catholics have

now the same faith as they had 100, 200, 500, 1,000, and nearly 1,900 years ago. He who differs in faith from the others, is not a Catholic.

2. All Catholics have the seven sacraments instituted by Jesus Christ. They are administered and received all over the Catholic Church throughout the world. The same holy Mass, the same ceremonies are everywhere to be found in the Church. When a priest from here goes to Rome, to Paris, he needs not ask how the priests there say Mass, for he knows it is said everywhere in the same way; and so it is with every sacrament.

3. All Catholics have the same head—the Pope. They all obey him and acknowledge him as their head.

123. What means: the Church is Holy?

The Church is Holy, means: her doctrine, her commandments, and her sacraments are holy, and make us holy.

Jesus Christ made the Church holy, that she might be able to make men holy and lead them to heaven by her teaching, her precepts, her sacraments which are holy and capable of making men holy.

1. The teaching of the Church is holy, because it comes from God. She teaches that we must do good and avoid evil; this is surely pleasing to God; he who follows the Church in this, will therefore please God.

2. The precepts of the Church are holy; for instance, the precept of hearing Mass on Sundays and holydays; that of confession and holy Communion.

3. Her sacraments are holy, for they impart or increase sanctifying grace; v. g., baptism and penance; holy Communion. Hence so many Catholics

become saints. All the saints in heaven are members of the Catholic Church; there are no others. Miracles are wrought through their intercession and prove their holiness. There are now many holy men and women living in the Catholic Church.

124. What means: the Church is Catholic?

The Church is Catholic, means: she was founded for all men, and is spread over the whole world.

Catholic = universal. The Church is called Roman Catholic, because her head is Bishop of Rome.

Jesus Christ instituted the Church for all men, because He died for all men. He sent His apostles to preach to all men, and to declare that there is no salvation out of the Church. The apostles preached the Gospel all over the world and converted men of every nation. The Popes have always sent bishops and priests all over the world to preach the Gospel; for instance, St. Patrick to Ireland, St. Boniface to Germany, St. Francis Xavier to the East Indies. There are now over fifteen thousand missionaries in heathen lands, and the Church is spread over every country in the world. One hundred and twenty-five years ago there were only twenty-five thousand Catholics and only a few priests in the United States, and now there are ninety bishops, over twelve thousand priests and more than twelve million Catholics.

125. What means: the Church is Apostolic?

The Church is Apostolic, means: her doctrine and her rulers are from the Apostles.

What the Church teaches to-day, the Apostles have taught. — The same seven sacraments, that we have, the Apostles administered. — The Pope and the Bishops are the lawful successors of the Apostles.

1. The teaching of the Church is apostolic. What Pope Leo XIII. taught and what Pius X. teaches, is the same as what St. Peter and St. Paul taught. What is now preached in our churches is the same as what was preached all over the world by the apostles. What Catholics now believe, was believed by the Catholics nearly nineteen hundred years ago. St. Cyprian († 258), St. Augustine († 430), St. Bernard († 1153), St. Thomas († 1274), St. Francis de Sales († 1622) and St. Alphonsus († 1787), all have written books on the Catholic faith, and all agree with one another.

2. The apostles taught that Christ instituted seven sacraments; they baptized, confirmed, said Mass, heard confessions, administered extreme unction, ordained priests and married people, just as is now done in the Church. In Rome there is still kept the very altar on which St. Peter said Mass eighteen hundred and fifty years ago!

3. The hierarchy of the Church comes from the apostles. St. Peter was the first Pope, and now Pius X. is the two hundred and sixty-fourth Pope. The bishops, one thousand in number, are the successors of the other apostles, and received their ordination and powers from the apostles. He who is not validly and lawfully consecrated bishop, is not a successor of the apostles.

At all times there have been bad and proud people who would not obey the Pope, just as Lucifer would not obey God. Others led a bad life and would not keep the commandments of God and the precepts of the Church. Many of these undertook to build up a church of their own, to found a new religion, and pretended to have the true church. About sixteen hundred years ago Arius, a proud priest, taught that Jesus Christ is not the Son of God, not true God, but only a creature;

many followed him and fell away from the Church. There are now no more Arians. About four hundred years ago a bad, proud, immoral monk, called Martin Luther, fell away from the Church, corrupted Holy Scripture, preached new doctrines, spoke against the Pope, told people they needed not keep the commandments, but could break them as often as they liked, provided they only believed that Christ had died for them, and they would be sure to go to heaven. He told the kings to steal church and convent property and enrich themselves. Thus he started Protestantism and founded Lutheranism. Henry VIII. of England was a very wicked and cruel man. He put away his good, pious wife, and tried to compel the Pope to let him marry another. The Pope could not and would not. Henry told the English they must have nothing more to do with the Pope, and beheaded one wife after another and eighteen bishops, 500 priests and thousands of laymen, because they would not give up their religion and renounce the Pope. He started a new religion—the Episcopalian. Calvin, a very bad and cruel man, and John Knox, a very bad man also, founded Presbyterianism. All these are Protestants. Protestants are now split into hundreds of wrangling sects, all disagreeing among themselves, but all firmly united to oppose the Catholic Church and to try to destroy her. But in vain they strive to do so. The Catholic Church, as our Lord says, is a great tree, full of branches; when a branch gets rotten, it falls, or is broken, or is cut off and has no more life; these branches are the Protestant sects, which are cut off from the life-giving tree—the Catholic Church, and hence they are not one, holy, Catholic, or apostolic.

Thank God that you are Catholics. Many Protestants, knowing no better, believe they have the truth; pray for them. There can be only one true

Church, for Jesus Christ founded only one. If a Protestant has doubts about his church being the true Church, you should help him to find out the truth, by explaining your catechism to him. Show him how Protestants are not one in faith, in the sacraments, and have no head; that they are split into hundreds of sects, all contradicting each other. Show him that his church is not holy, for it teaches, not the doctrine of Christ, but the doctrines of men, and cannot, therefore, be true or pleasing to God, or able to sanctify the people. Show him that the preachers have not the power to remit sins, no more than a Catholic child, who can baptize better than most of them. Show him that his church is not Catholic, not spread over the whole earth, and that though the Protestant sects spend annually millions of dollars to convert the heathen, they have never yet converted a single heathen nation, whilst all the heathen nations that were converted to Christianity were converted by the Catholic Church. Show him that his church is not apostolic, because it cannot go back to the apostles, but only to a mere unauthorized man, its founder, only a few centuries ago at the very most. Protestantism has no succession of St. Peter or of the apostles; hence it cannot be true. Then show him how the Catholic Church is, as the catechism gives it, the Church of Christ, one, holy, catholic and apostolic.

126. What means: the Church is Infallible?

The Church is Infallible, means: she cannot err in matters of faith and morals.

"I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world" (Matt. 28, 20). *"The Holy Ghost...will teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind, whatsoever I shall have said to you"* (John 14, 26). — The Church is *"the pillar and ground of the truth"* (1. Tim. 3, 15). — Councils.

Infallible means incapable of error or mistake. Every man is fallible, that is, liable to err, to make mistakes, to regard as truth what is false, or to regard as false what is true. The Church is infallible, means that the Pope and the bishops with him cannot say or teach what is false, untrue, erroneous. This must be so, for if the Church could teach falsehood, she would be liable to lead people astray and not to heaven, and thus be opposed to God, who is truth, and would not be God's Church. Since God founded her to lead men to truth and to heaven, and commands all men under pain of eternal damnation to believe her teaching, He is bound to make her infallible, to make her fit to teach the truth without danger of error or mistake. If this were not so, God would oblige us to believe what might be false; but, because He is truth itself, He cannot do this; therefore He must have made the Church infallible—able to teach the truth always without danger of error or mistake. (See Mat. 28, 20, above.)

Where Jesus is, there can be no untruth, no error; He sees to it that the bishops and the Pope teach what He commanded them. Jesus said, moreover, that He would send the Holy Ghost to His Church, who would abide with her forever. (See also above John 14, 26). As our Lord had promised, the Holy Ghost came down upon the apostles and remained with them and their successors, teaching them all truth, for He, the spirit of truth, cannot teach her anything false. Therefore, St. Paul rightly called the Church "the pillar and ground of the truth." In large churches the pillars are large and massive, made of stone or iron, firmly fixed in the ground, and strong enough to support the ceiling and roof, and even large walls. The "ground of truth" means the foundation of truth. The foundation of a building

is deep in the ground and able to hold up the walls and the whole building. Hence the Church is that strong pillar and foundation which hold up firmly and immovably the building of truth.

Church assemblies and councils. At various times bad men have come forth teaching false doctrines and trying to lead men astray from the faith, and some even succeeded in causing great trouble and perverting many and causing much doubt in others, so that a council of bishops was convened to point out the truth and condemn error, that all might know what to believe and what to reject. There have been about twenty general councils in the Church. The first of these was held at Nice, in Bithynia, in 325, and consisted of 318 bishops. There the Arians were condemned for saying that Jesus Christ is not true God. The most famous council was that of Trent, held from 1545 to 1563 against Luther and the other Protestants. The last council was held in Rome, at the Vatican, in 1869 and 1870.

127. Is the Pope alone infallible?

The Pope alone is infallible, when he decides what all Christians must believe and practise.

When we say that the Church is infallible, we mean the Pope together with all the bishops in council. But all the bishops cannot always meet together, when a decision is to be given in matters of faith and morals. Is the Pope able to give the decision all alone? Yes, because he is infallible. This was decreed by the Vatican council in 1870. It is not a new doctrine, for the Church cannot teach anything new, but only what Jesus Himself taught, what has always been believed in the Church. She can only declare what is the faith, what is right. Jesus Christ Himself made St. Peter

and his successors, the Popes, infallible (Matt. 16, 18 and 19). The Pope is infallible does not mean that he, as an individual, can never make a mistake, or that he cannot sin, for he also says the Confiteor and goes to confession regularly. But it means that when he decides, as head of the Church, what we must believe and do to be saved, he cannot err or teach what is not true. And why? Because the Holy Ghost assists and directs him, as our Lord promised.

128. How long will the Church last?

The Church will last till the end of the world, and her enemies cannot destroy her.

"The gates of hell shall never prevail against it" (Matt. 16, 18). *"Behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world"* (Matt. 28, 20).

The Church cannot be destroyed. Jesus compared her to a house built on a rock, that cannot be overthrown. No one can destroy her; not even the devil (see above Mat. 16, 18). The devil hates the Church, and does all he can to destroy her; he also induced bad and powerful men to do it for him, first the Jews, then the Roman emperors. These latter condemned all Christians to death, and killed all they could catch who would not give up their faith. Millions died rather than give it up; the more were killed, the more the Christians increased in number, and the more the Church spread everywhere. Then came bad men, teaching false doctrines; they tried to make the Church teach false doctrines also, so that the Church would break up of itself. In some countries many Catholics lost the faith, but the number of Catholics increased in other countries. The Church is persecuted at all times somewhere. Thirty years ago the priests and bishops in Germany were imprisoned

and exiled. But soon the Church grew there stronger and larger than ever. Now the Church is persecuted in France in a truly devilish manner; but the Church will come out of it all victorious, for Christ is always with her, as He promised (see above Matt. 28, 20).

129. Can anyone be saved out of the Church?

Out of the Church no one can be saved, because she alone was founded by Christ to save men.

"He cannot have God for His Father who has not the Church for his mother" (St. Cyprian). Whoever through his *own fault* does not belong to the Church, cannot be saved.

Jesus Christ founded the Church to save all men; He founded only one Church—the Catholic Church. All other Churches are not founded by Christ, but by mere men without power or authority, and are, therefore, counterfeit churches, false churches, and of no value whatever for heaven. Jesus Christ wills that all men should be saved; after dying for them He founded His Church to save them; He, therefore, wills that all men should join His Church. He promises salvation to those who join it, and says that those who do not, shall be condemned (Mark 16, 16). There is, then, no salvation out of the Catholic Church. She is like Noah's ark; all that were not in it, perished. (See above text of St. Cyprian.)

Does that mean that all Protestants and non-Catholics will surely go to hell? Now listen. He who strikes his parents commits a grievous sin. A mother holds her baby in her arms; the baby strikes her in the face. Does the baby commit a grievous sin? No; because it knows no better and does not do it through malice. Meat is forbidden

on Fridays; a certain man eats meat on a Friday, but does not know it is Friday. It is no sin for him, because he does not do it wilfully. Many Protestants and non-Catholics know no better; they have, however, the good will to do all that God requires of them, and do it, as far as they know; they think that their faith is true; they are sincere, in good faith; if they knew that the Catholic Church is the only true Church, they would become Catholics. They are out of the Church, but not through their own fault, and are in spirit really Catholic. Now God alone knows which non-Catholics are in good faith and sincere; He alone judges each one after death, and will condemn only those who are guilty of unrepented mortal sin; and no one will go to hell except through his own fault.

130. Will all the members of the Church be saved?

Not all the members of the Church will be saved, but only those who are practical Catholics.

131. Who is a practical Catholic?

A practical Catholic is one, who lives according to the Catholic faith.

He that keeps the commandments of God and of the Church, receives the sacraments, and frequently raises his heart to God in prayer. — *Excommunication*, (Freemasonry, etc.).

1. Many Catholics, although they have the true faith, will be lost forever, because they do not practise their faith. To be saved, we must not only believe what the Church teaches, but we must also do all that the Church commands; that is, we must be practical Catholics. A genuine, practical Catholic hears Mass and the word of God on Sundays and holydays, abstains from meat on the days prescribed, goes to confession and holy Communion

at the very least once a year, obeys his pastor, joins no forbidden society, frequents no sinful or dangerous company and amusements, sends his children to a Catholic school, says his prayers daily. Such a one will be saved. But he who does not do this, but lives like a heathen, although he may believe as a Catholic, will not be saved unless he sincerely repents before he dies.

2. There are severe punishments for those who will not obey the Church. The Pope has the power and the right to excommunicate—that is, exclude from the Church those who commit enormous crimes, who will not submit to the Church. He who is excommunicated is like one who never belonged to the Church. Just like parents sometimes drive away very bad children, and no longer look upon them as their children; thus the Pope casts out of the Church those who join the Freemasons and other similar secret societies. A Catholic who joins such a society is no longer a Catholic, but is just like a heathen. So long as he remains in such a society, he cannot receive any of the sacraments, and not even at the hour of death, and, when dead, his body will not have Christian burial. This punishment is called excommunication.

Application. Give thanks to God that you are a member of the Catholic Church. If you live as a good Catholic, you will also die as such, and go to Heaven. If not, you will be punished in hell more severely than the pagans. Pray for the conversion of heretics and infidels.

We cannot be too grateful to God for having called us to the true Church. So many hundred milions of men have not received so great a blessing. Most of them are unbelievers or pagans, the others are heretics. Why did God bestow so great a grace on you? Not because you deserved it, but because He loved you in a special manner. Let

us thank Him for it and show Him our gratitude by living up to our faith. If we so live, we shall die as good Catholics and go to heaven forever. It is the greatest grace and happiness on earth to be a Catholic, to have the true faith. And if we live as good Catholics, we shall be forever happy in heaven. Let us live and pray for those who have not been so favored, that God may bestow on them the inestimable gift of the true faith.

2. The Communion of Saints.

132. Who belong to the communion of saints?

To the communion of saints belong

1) the faithful on earth,
2) the souls in purgatory,
3) the saints in Heaven.

The Church Militant, Church Suffering, and Church Triumphant.

Those who should become happy, those who will surely be happy, those who are already happy.

1. Communion here means, not holy Communion, but fellowship—those united by a common bond; for instance, the members of a family are connected together by a common bond; so also is a society, so also is the Church. All belong to the Church who have the same Father in heaven—God, the same Redeemer—Jesus Christ, the same mother—the Church, the same heaven. Hence all those who are in heaven and in purgatory, and all the faithful on earth belong to the Church. But are all saints? Those who are in heaven and in purgatory are already saints; but the faithful on earth may not yet be saints, but are destined to become saints. They should all be saints, for they have been baptized, but some of them have sinned and lost sanctifying grace. The

good are holy and belong to the body and the soul of the Church. Bad Catholics belong indeed to the body, but not to the soul of the Church, for they have no spiritual life, since they have not sanctifying grace. To go to heaven we must at our death belong to the Soul of the Church.

2. The saints in heaven and the souls in purgatory are also Catholics, members of the Church. The reprobate in hell are no longer members of the Church, for they have forfeited their salvation and all claims to the fruits of the redemption. The Church is like a very large family, consisting of very many children, of whom some emigrate to a new country and reach it; these are the saints in heaven; others commit sin on the way and are put into prison for a time, and yet are still members of the family as well as the others; these are the souls in purgatory.

3. The Church exists, then, not only on earth, but also in heaven and in purgatory. Most of the good members go from the Church on earth to purgatory and thence to heaven. The Church on earth is called the Church militant, because its members have to fight continually against their enemies, the devil, the world and their own passions. In purgatory it is called the Church suffering, because its members have to expiate their sins by suffering; when on earth they received wounds in combating, and they have to wait in purgatory till their wounds are all healed. In heaven it is called the Church triumphant, because it triumphs by its victories and is honored.

133. In what does the communion of saints consist?

The communion of saints consists in this, that its members love and help one another.

The members of a family naturally help one

another. So in the Church; the saints in heaven help us, and we on earth help each other and also the souls in purgatory.

134. How do the faithful on earth help one another?

The faithful on earth help one another by prayer and good works.

All are benefited by the good that is done by one. In a large hall there are a hundred persons, each having a lighted candle. Every one has the benefit of his own light, as well as that of all the others. What is earned *by one* member of the family, benefits *all its other* members. All the faithful participate in all the Masses that are said.

Good Christians often say to one another: "Pray for me." You pray for your parents and they pray for you. God rewards you for your prayers, and bestows some favor on those for whom you pray. You should pray for all Christians. When a Catholic does anything good, all the other Catholics in some manner share in it.—Comparison. In a hall full of men at night one holds a lighted candle; all the others see it and see by it; when more hold lighted candles, the light is greater and all can see so much the better. In like manner, when you do something good, you edify all who see it and induce them to imitate you.

135. How do we help the poor souls in purgatory?

We help the poor souls in purgatory by prayer, good works, indulgences, and, especially, by the holy sacrifice of the Mass.

"*It is therefore a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from sins*" (II. Mach. 12, 46).

All-Souls-day, Nov. 2. — Day of death. Third day, seventh day, and month's mind. Anniversary.

1. Very few who die a good death are pure enough to go straight to heaven; most of them

have to suffer in purgatory, because they have some venial sins not yet forgiven, or have not done penance enough for the sins already forgiven them. They must remain in purgatory until they are entirely pure and stainless. In purgatory they suffer great pains and an intense longing—a homesickness for heaven. They cannot help themselves. They are our brethren. God allows us to help them to get out of purgatory sooner, by our prayers, penances, good works, etc. God accepts what we do for them as the payment of what they owe to His justice.

2. Every good work we perform produces two things: First, by it gain some reward in heaven; secondly, it enables us to pay for some of the punishment we deserve for our sins. The first, that is, the merit we gain in heaven, we keep for ourselves, and cannot give it away; but the second, which is called satisfaction, or atonement, for sin, we may give to others, and especially to the souls in purgatory.

3. What can we do for the suffering souls? We may offer up, that is, give to God, our prayers for them. (Enumerate prayers.) You may say every morning at prayer: "All the prayers I shall say today will be for the souls in purgatory."

4. We can help them by our good works. A good work is something we do to please God; for instance, getting up early in the morning, going to Mass, to school, studying, obeying, overcoming ourselves to do what we should do, but do not like, giving alms, denying ourselves, suffering pain, etc. (Explain some of these.)

5. We can help them by gaining indulgences. Later on you will learn what are indulgences. He who recites a prayer which has an indulgence, obtains as much remission of the punishment due to sin as is given in the indulgence: for instance,

if you say, "My Jesus, mercy," you gain an indulgence of one hundred days; that means that one hundred days of penance due to your sins is forgiven; if you offer it up for the souls in purgatory, they get the benefit of the remission.

6. Holy Mass is the very best help for them. In the Mass said for them, Jesus offers Himself up for them. There is nothing greater or more holy than the sacrifice of the Mass. Therefore, often hear Mass with devotion for the souls in purgatory; have some Masses said for them.

7. You may help all the souls in purgatory, or only some particular one. You should help, especially all who are related to you; your benefactors, etc.; the most abandoned. (See above 2 Mach. 12, 16.) Every prayer well said is holy; wholesome means that the prayers said for the souls in purgatory benefits them; it is a work of spiritual mercy very pleasing to God.

The Church has appointed November 2 as a day on which Masses and prayers should especially be said for them. It is called All Souls' Day. When a member of the family dies, Mass should be said on the day of the burial; also on the third, or seventh day after the death; also on the thirtieth day, or month's mind, and on the anniversary of the death or burial. You should never forget to pray for the souls of your deceased parents, relatives, etc.

136. How do the saints in Heaven help us?

The saints in Heaven help us by praying to God for us.

The saints are our brethren; they love us much; they take a great interest in us; when they were on earth, they loved to help others; and now that they can do more for us, they delight in helping

us. They now know our wants better, our dangers, our weakness. They pray to God for us, that we may gain heaven and be with them. But they pray especially for those who beg their prayers and their help. Their prayers please God, because He loves them much and will not refuse them anything. Have you never seen some one who is now a saint in heaven? Think a little. Have you never seen a baby that died soon after baptism? The baby is now a saint in heaven.

Application. All Christians are benefited by your good works, as you are benefited by theirs. Pray often for the poor souls; they are in great need of assistance, but cannot help themselves. They are grateful for your prayers, and will pray for you, particularly if, by your prayer they sooner go to Heaven. Rejoice that you belong to the communion of saints, and will one day be admitted to their happy company.

Let us do much good for our own benefit and for the benefit of others. God wills that we all help one another, for He taught us to pray, not for ourselves only, but for all, when He taught us the most beautiful of prayers—the *Our Father*. Let us help the souls in purgatory. If we had a brother suffering from a fearful thirst, we would not refuse him a drink of cold water. The souls in purgatory have a fearful thirst in the fire of purgatory and ask for a cooling drink; you can give it to them by sprinkling holy water, by offering prayers and good works for them. When they reach heaven, they will not forget you, but will there pray for you, protect you and help you also to reach heaven. Think often of the communion of saints, that we are all destined to be forever happy together in heaven.

Forgiveness of Sins.

Tenth Article of the Creed.

137. Who can forgive sins?

Only God can forgive sins, and those to whom God has given this power.

This power God has given to bishops and priests.

138. How are sins forgiven?

Sins are forgiven by the Sacraments of Baptism and Penance.

Strictly speaking, God alone can forgive sin, for sin offends Him. If you strike John and afterwards are sorry for it, and you wish to be forgiven, you cannot get his brother William to forgive you, but you must get John's forgiveness, because you offended John. But if John told William that he could forgive you in his stead, then you could go to William and ask him to forgive you the offence you committed against John, and William's forgiveness would be as good as if John forgave you himself. Why? Because John delegated his power to William, and William holds his place. In like manner, God delegated to bishops and priests the power to forgive sins in His stead; and, therefore, men must go to them to have their sins forgiven.

Application. In baptism, you are cleansed from original sin. If you have committed grievous sin after baptism, the *only* salvation is the sacrament of penance. Nothing defiled can enter Heaven.

You are all baptized, and original sin has been forgiven you. If you have since committed mortal sin, you cannot again be baptized, but you must go to confession.

The Four Last Things.

Eleventh and twelfth Articles of the Creed.

The resurrection of the body; — and life everlasting. Amen.

139. Which are the four last things of man?

The four last things of man are Death, Judgment, Heaven and hell.

The four last things here mean the last things that happen to men. They have happened to those who are already dead, and will happen to those who are now living or will yet live on earth. Purgatory is not mentioned, because it does not last always, and those who are in it will go at last to heaven. After the general judgment there will no longer be a purgatory.

Death and Resurrection.

140. What happens when a person dies?

When a person dies his soul separates from the body.

The eleventh article of the creed is—the resurrection of the body. When the soul leaves the body, the body dies; that is, it is deprived of life, for the soul is the life of the body. The soul and body have been like two friends, two inseparable companions. At last they must part, for the soul has to go to a strange distant country.

141. What is certain about our death?

It is certain that we all *must* die.

"It is appointed unto men once to die" (Heb. 9, 27). *"By sin death entered into the world"* (Rom. 5, 12).

The only thing certain about our death is that we

must die once. All who have lived 150, 200, 500, 1,000 years ago have died. Abel was the first man to die. All men now living must die once, sooner or later; some today, others tomorrow. Every day eighty thousand people die. When a child is born, no one knows what is to become of it, except that it shall one day die. (See above Hebr. 9, 27.) Sin brought death into the world. (Rom. 5, 12.) Had man not sinned, death would never have come to man. Two men who lived thousands of years ago, are still alive: Henoch, a holy man who lived before the deluge, and Elias, a great prophet. They will both come back on earth before the end of the world, to preach to men, and then they will die.

142. What is uncertain about our death?

It is uncertain when, where, and how we shall die.

"Wherefore be you also ready: because at what hour you know not, the Son of man will come" (Matt. 24, 44).

1. We know not when we shall die, for we may die at any moment. He who is in good health now, may be dead tomorrow. A priest was beginning Mass with the sign of the cross, but he could not finish it, for he dropped down dead. A priest was preaching on death, a woman in church screamed and fell down dead.—Many die as little children; many boys and girls of your age die. None of you knows whether you will be alive a year hence. It is well that we do not know when we shall die, for if most of men knew when they were to die, they would become very wicked, for they would feel sure that they need not fear God's judgment for so and so long; they would remain bad, expecting to be converted just a little before death would come to them, and then to be sure of heaven. Let us always be good, for if we commit a mortal sin, we may die

right away, have no time to repent, and thus be condemned to hell forever! (See above Matt. 24, 44.) Death comes like a thief when it is least expected.

2. We do not know where we shall die—at home, in the street, in church, in bad company, on land, on water. God alone knows this. A man once asked a sailor: "Where did your father die?" He answered: "On the sea." "Your grandfather?" "On the sea." Your great-grandfather?" "On the sea also." "Are you not then afraid to go on the sea?" The sailor than asked him: "Where did your father die?" The man answered: "In his bed." "Your grandfather?" "In his bed." "Your great-grandfather?" "In his bed also." "Are you not then afraid to go to bed to sleep?"

3. We do not know how we shall die! Many die after a long sickness, others die suddenly; some die a natural death, others die a violent death—from fire, water, explosion, cars, firearms, are murdered, or meet with some fatal accident. Some after confession, others without any chance of making their confession. Some in the state of grace, others in mortal sin!

143. What is done with the body after death?

After death, the body is placed in the grave, where it decays and returns to dust.

Cemetery = graveyard = God's acre. — "Remember man, that thou art dust, and into dust thou shalt return." (Ash-Wednesday.)

Did you ever see a dead person laid out? The corpse is clothed in fine clothes, the hands are joined, holding a crucifix and a rosary; it is put into a coffin; after one, two or three days the coffin is closed and the corpse is brought to church, where the last rites are performed; then the fun-

eral procession proceeds to the graveyard, and the body, amid the prayers of the priest and people, is lowered into the grave, and the grave is closed. There the body begins to swell up and rot, emitting a fearful stench; the worms eat up all the flesh, and leave only the bones; by degrees the bones fall to pieces and crumble into dust. For this reason the priest, whilst placing blessed ashes on Ash-Wednesday on the forehead of each one, says: "Remember, man," etc. The ancient pagans used to burn the bodies of the dead and keep their ashes; in our time some unbelievers do the same, but the Church forbids this for good reasons.

144. How long will the body remain dust?

The body will remain dust until the Last Day, the end of the world.

145. What will become of the body on the last day?

On the last day, God will restore the body from the dust and re-unite it to the soul.

"The hour cometh wherein all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God: And they that have done good things, shall come forth unto the resurrection of life: but they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment" (John 5, 28, 29).

A man once took his watch apart, and had a lot of wheels, springs, screws, etc., and could not put them together again; he brought them to a watch-maker, and the watch-maker cleaned them and put them together again, so that the watch looked like new. Did he make a new watch? No; he merely cleaned, and fitted the parts together; it was the same watch as before. So will God do at the last day. After death man's body falls to pieces, turns into ashes, dust, etc. Now God, who knows and can do all things, puts these parts together again, and each soul will get back its own body at the

last day. The souls will then come, some out of heaven, others out of hell, to join their own bodies.

146. What will happen after the soul has been re-united to the body?

After the soul has been re-united to the body, man will rise from the dead.

As soon as the soul re-enters the body, the body will be alive again, and all the dead will arise alive out of their graves.

147. Will all men rise from the dead?

All men will rise from the dead: the wicked as well as the just.

All men without exception, that have lived since the creation, and that will live till the end of the world, shall rise again. Our Lord says: "The hour cometh, wherein all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God. And they that have done good things shall come forth unto the resurrection of life; but they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment," (John 5, 28, 30.) Resurrection of life means heavenly bliss, and resurrection of judgment means eternal damnation.—Death is like a deep sleep, which the body sleeps, until God, who is almighty, wakes it up. How consoling to think of the resurrection, when we shall see each other again in our bodies, with the same senses, etc.

1. God wills the resurrection of the dead, because Jesus Christ came to restore all that had been caused by sin. Sin brought death into the world, and death is a separation. God will re-unite at the last day what death separated, and the work of the redemption will be complete.

2. Our soul is different from the angels. An angel is a pure spirit, not made to live in a body;

but our soul is a spirit made to live in a body. When the soul is out of the body, it does not feel at home; even in heaven the soul has not complete happiness, for it longs to share its joys with the body. Body and soul are like two loving inseparable friends.

3. The body in this life shares in the good and evil deeds of the soul; v. g., at prayer, at Mass, at school, in almsgiving, etc.; also in cursing, evil conversations, anger, etc. Hence justice requires that the body should share in the reward or punishment of the soul, and be with the soul forever in heaven, or forever in hell.

148. How will the bodies of the just appear at the resurrection?

At the resurrection, the bodies of the just will appear glorious and transfigured.

The body of man, like seed, is sown in *God's acre.* The seed decays, but blooms into new life; so also the body. We honor the bodies of the dead: they are blessed and placed in *consecrated* ground.

The bodies, when raised again to life, will not all appear alike. On earth we cannot see from people's bodies whether they are good or bad. Sometimes very good people have ugly bodies, and very bad people have beautiful bodies. But it will not be so at the resurrection. The bodies will be like the souls. The bodies of the good will be transfigured, bright and glorious, shining like the sun—all beautiful, fine in form and size. Just as a seed planted in the ground rots and yet there comes out a beautiful plant, which grows and bears fruit, so, also, if we are good, our bodies will rot in the ground, and then come out beautiful, perfect, lovely and live a new happy life. That is why the Church honors the bodies of the dead; she blesses and incenses them and lays them in consecrated grounds in a cemetery, or God's field. Formerly the graveyard

was around the church, and there was a cross on every grave, to show that man is saved by the cross and will rise again by its power. We honor the relics of saints, that is, their bones, or parts of their bodies, because they are holy and destined to enjoy eternal glory. Mass is always celebrated over the relics of martyrs.

149. How will the bodies of the wicked appear at the resurrection?

At the resurrection, the bodies of the wicked will appear hideous and loathsome.

"We shall all, indeed, rise again, but we shall not all be changed" (i. e. glorified) (I. Cor. 15, 51). *"He that soweth in his flesh, of the flesh also shall reap corruption"* (Gal. 6, 8).

1. Unlike the bodies of the good, the bodies of the wicked will be ugly and horrid, worse than a rotten corpse in the grave. The soul of the wicked must enter such a body and forever remain in it. This will be already a terrible punishment. St. Paul says all bodies will rise, but not all will be changed, that is, transformed and beautiful, for those of the wicked will be full of corruption and stench. The farmer reaps what he sows; if he sows grass, he cannot reap wheat or fine fruits. He who commits a sin with his body, will reap his ruin, will be punished and will rise with a disgusting body.

2. Death is terrible; we say the hour of death, although it lasts but a moment. What makes death terrible is the judgment that follows. As one dies, so he remains forever. Where the tree falls when cut down, there it remains. He who dies in sanctifying grace, will be forever happy in heaven. He who dies in mortal sin will be in hell forever. Our eternity depends on the state in which we are at the hour of death.

3. To die well we should live well. As life is, so is death. He who leads a good life, will die a good death; he who leads a bad life, usually dies a bad death. Think often on death, especially when you are tempted to do wrong, and you shall not sin. Pray often for a good death to the Blessed Virgin (Hail Mary), to St. Joseph, to St. Barbara.

4. Keep from sin. The members of the body that sin will especially be punished—v. g., the tongue, the eyes. Keep from sin, and lay up good works for heaven. When you go to Mass in spite of bad weather, take holy water, bless yourself, etc., your body will be so much the more beautiful at the resurrection.

Judgment.

150. Where does the soul of man go immediately after death?

Immediately after death the soul of man goes before the judgment-seat of God.

Man is composed of body and soul. After death the body is laid in the grave, and the soul goes before God, who created and redeemed her, in order to be judged. A judge settles disputes and lawsuits; v. g., two persons claim the same thing and neither will give way; they go to court, and the judge hears both of them, and then decides the dispute, saying who is right, condemning the one in the wrong, or the wicked. So God does with the soul after death. He examines all she thought, said and did during life, shows her what she deserved, and decides where she is to go. As He knows all things, this does not take long. He sends her to heaven, or purgatory or hell, according to what she deserves.

151. What is the judgment immediately after death, called?

The judgment immediately after death, is called the particular judgment.

It is called thus, because then each soul is judged in private by herself, and not with other souls. It is held immediately after death, in the place where the person died.

152. Where does the soul go after the particular judgment?

After the particular judgment, the soul goes either to Heaven, to hell, or to purgatory.

After the particular judgment some souls go directly to heaven, others directly to hell, and others to purgatory.

153. What souls go to Heaven?

Those souls go to Heaven that are entirely free from sin and from the punishment due to it.

Those who die in the state of grace will go to heaven; but since nothing defiled can enter heaven, only those go there directly that have not the least stain of sin and have done enough penance for their sins. He who is without mortal sin, is in the state of grace, although his soul may be stained with many venial sins, or he may not have done enough penance for his sins. Besides little children that die after baptism and the martyrs, there are very few that are so perfectly pure as to be fit to enter heaven immediately after death.

154. What souls go to hell?

The souls of those who have died in mortal sin go to hell.

Not all those who have committed mortal sin go to hell, for a person may have committed thousands of them, and yet go to heaven after death, if he sincerely confessed them and died after having obtained forgiveness for them. But if a person dies with only one mortal sin, it is enough to condemn him to hell forever; just like one ball through the heart is enough to cause death.

155. What souls go to purgatory?

Those souls go to purgatory that have yet to atone for venial sins, or to suffer the temporal punishment due to sin.

All those souls go to purgatory that are not bad enough to go to hell, nor good enough to enter heaven. Such souls will have to go to a place where they will be cleansed from all sin, and where they will do all the penance necessary to pay their debts to God for their sins. That place is purgatory. If we do not do enough penance for our sins in this life, we shall have to perform it in the next.

156. How long must souls remain in purgatory?

Souls must remain in purgatory until they are free from sin and the punishment due to it.

1. How long one is to remain in purgatory depends on the number and malice of his venial sins and on how much temporal punishment he owes for his sins. Some souls remain there a few moments, others a few hours, others a few days, others for months, years, and perhaps even centuries. When we suffer pain, we find time fearfully long, especially at night. But we know nothing about the time in purgatory.—A certain priest died; another priest promised to say Mass for him the following day. During the night the dead

priest appeared to him and complained that he had left him 100 years in purgatory without saying the promised Mass. The priest replied: "You have died only a few hours ago."

2. What pains have the souls in purgatory to endure? Among others the pain of fire. How terrible is the pain caused by burning! It is the soul that feels it. But the fire in purgatory is very painful. But there are other sufferings in purgatory.

3. There was once a young man who had been away from home for many years. He had earned plenty of money; but he loved home and his parents very much; he started for home. On his way, when not very far from home, he fell sick. He had a long spell of sickness, and suffered great pains, and besides was fearfully homesick. He would say: "Oh! I would willingly suffer much more, if I could only be with father and mother. To be away from them, not to be able to go to them is far worse than sickness, for I long to see them, to be with them!" So it is with the souls in purgatory. They have merited much for heaven, and are on their way to it, very near to it, but they are kept back in purgatory in great pain, and are so very homesick for heaven.—How homesick are some children when they first go to college, etc., or have to work away from home! Some even die from the effects of homesickness. So the souls suffer in purgatory, whence they cry out to us to help them. Let us often say to God for them: "Eternal rest give unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them."

4. Let us often think of purgatory; it is a good and useful thought, for it makes us shrink from sin, and renders us willing to do penance for our sins in this life. In purgatory the souls have to suffer

much even for the least sin. You children often make little of telling lies, of disobedience, laziness, irreverence in church, etc. Oh! if you were to see how each little fault is punished in purgatory! But God is good and gives us the chance of doing penance on earth for these sins, sometimes by sickness, sometimes by poverty, sometimes by heat or cold, etc. Let us accept all this from God and bear it as a penance for our sins; we deserve even much more punishment than we get. Penance is much easier and shorter in this world than in purgatory. At confession the priests gives you a penance; accept it and perform it well—not in a hurry; it is so little in comparison to what we deserve. Let us sometimes do a little penance ourselves, for instance, eat no candy for some days, or no cake, or no fruit; do not run out to play sometimes, but offer to help mother at home; say some extra prayers, visit the church to pray a little. These things and the like will help you to pay your debts to God and shorten your purgatory, perhaps for many years. Also try to gain indulgences, pray for the souls in purgatory, especially for those of your parents, relatives, benefactors, and of those who may be there on your account, and they will help you; and when you are in purgatory, pious souls will pray for you also.

157. Will there be a purgatory after the general judgment?

After the general judgment, there will be no purgatory: there will be only Heaven and hell.

Purgatory will last only until the end of the world, when all who will then be in it, will have been sufficiently purified, and will go to heaven. The good who will die at the end of the world, will have so much to suffer then, that they will not

need any purgatory. It is just as if a man, to punish his bad son, decided to give him daily for a week, ten blows with a cowhide, but would afterwards let him off by giving him the 70 blows at once.

158. What will take place immediately after the resurrection of the dead?

Immediately after the resurrection of the dead, Christ will judge all mankind.

(Recapitulate what was said above about what happens to the soul and body immediately after death). At the last day Christ will judge all mankind publicly.

159. What is the judgment at the end of the world called?

The judgment at the end of the world is called the general judgment, or the last judgment.

At the general judgment each one has to appear before all men that ever lived and before the angels, in order to be judged.

160. Which are the things that Christ will judge?

The things that Christ will judge are the thoughts, words, actions, and omissions of our whole life.

At the general judgment all men and angels will see and know what each one has thought, said, done or omitted during his whole life. When you are judged, your parents will be present, also your relatives, your companions, teachers, the priest, etc., and will know all the good and evil you have done, said and thought. (Enumerate here sins against the commandments into which children usually fall; and also detail the good deeds of children.) All this will be as if stamped on your forehead, no matter how secretly they were done. What you

repented of and confessed properly will be seen as forgiven, and will not cause you confusion. Just like a fine dress that was torn, but the place torn is covered and adorned with gold trimmings.— Why should there be a general judgment?

1. That all men may see and acknowledge how just and wise God is in all that He does, or permits men to do. Good people sometimes complain of poverty, misfortune, sickness and other trials; they think God is not just, since He allows them to suffer so much, and often blesses the undertakings of wicked people. God will show how He punished on earth the little faults of the good and gave them so many chances to gain heaven, and rewarded on earth only the good deeds of the wicked.

2. That all may see God's justice in all things, rewarding the good and punishing the wicked without distinction of persons. King or beggar, rich or poor, every one will be judged according to his works. How many now rich, learned, or powerful, will then be condemned, whilst the poor, the simple, the ignorant will be saved! On earth the good are often unknown, ridiculed, abused, insulted, persecuted: on the last day they will all be known, honored, praised and rewarded. On earth the wicked are often not known as such, for they are hypocrites, they are often esteemed, praised, honored; but on the last day they will be made known, put to shame, reproved and condemned. (Apply this to that boy—to that girl—everybody believes to be so good—but so addicted to secret sins, etc.) What a shame when all their shameful deeds will be revealed before the whole world! They would wish that the earth should open and swallow them up, or that the mountains should fall upon them and screen them from sight. But, no! All will see and know their deeds!

3. That the good may also see the fruits of their good example. (Enumerate—parents properly bringing up their children; good example of good boys and good girls.) On the other hand, the wicked will see the evil effects of their bad example; how it led others astray. (Enumerate various sins of scandal.) They will see how their evil example caused the damnation of so many previously innocent children.

4. That Jesus Christ may be glorified before the whole universe. At His first coming He was poor, despised, insulted, persecuted, publicly put to the most disgraceful death. Now all this must be publicly atoned for, and He must be glorified and honored before the whole universe, and His enemies must be made publicly to acknowledge Him as the Son of God and the Redeemer of the world.

161. What will Christ do after the last judgment?

After the last judgment Christ will pronounce the sentence.

At the end of a trial the judge gives his decision concerning the accused; thus will Jesus act at the last judgment.

162. What will Christ say to the just?

Christ will say to the just: "Come ye blessed of My Father, possess the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matt. 25, 34).

To the good Jesus will speak with love:—Come with Me—you are blessed by My Father. To bless means to wish good. When we wish some one a good morning, we cannot make the morning good to him. But God can; He does the good He wishes

to one. Hence when Jesus will tell the good to come with Him and take possession of the Kingdom of heaven, He will take them to heaven along with Him.

163. What will Christ say to the wicked?

Christ will say to the wicked: "Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt. 25, 41).

Our Lord will say to the wicked: Depart, that is, Away with you; from Me, from God, whom you shall no more see. Ye cursed; curse is the opposite of blessing; God wills every kind of evil to the wicked. They must depart—where to? Into everlasting fire—to burn in it forever—to be there punished with the devils. What a terrible sentence!

164. What will happen immediately after the sentence is pronounced on judgment day?

Immediately after the sentence is pronounced on judgment day, the just with body and soul will enter Heaven, and the wicked with body and soul will be cast into hell.

What a beautiful sight will it be to see the good ascending to heaven with Jesus Christ and the angels! How terrible the sight of the wicked cast by the devils into hell forever!

Doomsday. *"Of that day and hour no one knoweth."* Before this day the Antichrist will come, and terrible signs appear in the heavens. Then the angels will sound their trumpets and cry out: Arise, ye dead! Resurrection. Separation: the just to the right, the wicked to the left. Heaven opens. The cross of Christ appears, followed by the angels and the Judge. Judgment. Burning of the world.

I will tell you in a few words *all we know* about the end of the world, about the last day—doomsday. After that day there will be no more days, no more time, but only eternity—eternity in heaven, or eternity in hell! When will the last day come? No one on earth knows; even the angels do not know; God alone knows. It may come in a few years, or it may be thousands of years away. He who ventures to fix the date of the last day, speaks foolishly, for he knows nothing about it.

Shortly before the last day Antichrist will come. Antichrist means "opposed to Christ." He will be the most wicked man that ever lived; he will be full of devilish malice. He will say: "I am Christ." Helped by the devil, he will perform wonderful things and deceive men. The sun will then be darkened, the moon will give no light, and the stars will fall from heaven. The whole earth will quake, the waters of the ocean will flow over the land; all men then living will die. Then God will send His angels to sound the trumpet, calling out from one end of the earth to the other: "Arise, ye dead, and come to judgment." Then all the graves will stir, and the bodies of the dead will be formed again from the dust, and the souls coming out of heaven and hell, will enter their bodies and make them alive again, and they will rise out of their graves. Then the angels will come to separate the good from the wicked. They will do this very easily, for the bodies of the good will be beautiful and bright, and those of the wicked will be ugly and hideous. The angels will place the good on the right, and the wicked on the left. Then the heavens will open, and a brilliant cross will come forth, followed by our Lord Himself in heavenly glory and majesty, seated on the bright clouds of heaven. Immense choirs of angels will accompany

Him to the place of judgment. From Jesus Christ a piercing light will come forth and penetrate every person, so that everybody may see in each one all the good and evil he did during his whole life. After this Jesus will pronounce sentence on the good and the wicked, as you have already heard. Immediately after the sentence the good will ascend in triumph to heaven, and the wicked will be cast into hell, and there will be an eternal separation between the good and the wicked. The wicked will cast a last look on their relatives, friends, etc., ascending to heaven, whilst they are being cast headlong into the jaws of hell, to be forever fearfully punished. Then a fierce fire will burn up the earth, and will burn out from it the curse of sin, and there will be a new earth and a new heaven.

Heaven.

165. What is Heaven?

Heaven is the place of eternal happiness.

1. You sometimes hear people say: "I wish I were in heaven." Why do they say so? Because heaven is the place of the greatest happiness. Everybody desires to be happy, to enjoy pleasure. You find pleasure in playing, in eating something good, in wearing fine clothes; many people find pleasure in having plenty of money. When you have plenty of pleasure, you feel quite happy, and even think yourself perfectly happy. But on earth no one is perfectly happy, no one is really happy, for all pleasures are short, and cannot be enjoyed very long. If they last long, they soon tire us, and prove hurtful to us. And no matter how happy one's life may be, death will soon come and put an end to both life and earthly happiness. The very

thought of death makes people feel miserable. True happiness must be everlasting, and can be found only in heaven. There those who are saved enjoy all possible pleasures, all they can think of, all they can wish for, and countless pleasures far greater than we know or can imagine; and all this without end!

2. Suppose there was a child born in a cave, that never saw a ray of light, and could find its way only by feeling about the cold stones. Suppose after many years some one brings that child out into the open air on a bright day. When that child sees all the beautiful things on earth—animals, trees, flowers, fine houses, beautifully dressed people, it will be full of joy and say: "Oh! I never thought there could be anything so beautiful!" In like manner, when the good enter heaven and see and enjoy its beauties and pleasures they will be overcome with joy, and say: "Oh! I never thought heaven so beautiful or so full of pleasure and happiness!"

166. In what does the happiness of the blessed in Heaven chiefly consist?

The happiness of the blessed in Heaven chiefly consists in this, that for all eternity

1) they are free from all evils,

2) they see God,

3) they are united with Him in the most intimate love.

"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them, that love Him" (I. Cor. 2, 9).

1. In heaven there is no weeping, no sorrow; God will wipe away the tears from the eyes of the blessed. In heaven there is no suffering. On earth suffering always comes after pleasure. Not so in

heaven, where there is no pain, no misfortune, no evil, no sin, the greatest of evils.

2. In heaven the blessed see God. We like what is beautiful, for instance, flowers, fine dress, handsome people, pictures, house, a beautifully decorated church, a clear sky at night full of bright stars. But God is infinitely more beautiful than all these things, so much so that the blessed never grow weary beholding His beauty. On Mount Thabor Jesus Christ was transfigured for a few moments; His face shone as the sun, His garments were as white as snow, so beautiful indeed was He, that St. Peter exclaimed: "Lord it is good for us to be here." He wished to stay there always. The beauty of the glorified body of our Lord, of the Blessed Virgin, of the saints, is so great that, were we now to get a glimpse of it, it would make us die of joy. How much greater the beauty of God Himself!

3. The blessed in heaven overflow with love for God. The more they see Him, the more they know Him, and the more they know Him, the more they love Him. Two good friends love each other, like to be always together. Little children like to be always with their mother. So the blessed in heaven like to be always with God, for they love Him so much. Heaven is so beautiful, so lovely, so full of joy that we cannot even imagine what a happy place it is: (I Cor. 2, 9.) The earthly paradise was very beautiful, but nothing like heaven! St. John says the streets of heaven are of gold, the walls of sparkling gems, the gates of shining pearls; but this is only a weak idea of its beauty. All the beauty on earth—parks, gardens, fine houses, music—bears no comparison with that of heaven. There we shall see the angels and saints, the Blessed Virgin, and be with them, enjoy

their company, and hear them singing, and join also with them in singing the praise of God. And all this forever—without end!

167. Will the just be equally happy in Heaven?

The just will not be equally happy in Heaven: he who merited more, will receive a greater reward.

"He who soweth sparingly, shall also reap sparingly: he who soweth in blessings, shall also reap of blessings" (II. Cor. 9, 6). *(God) "will render to every man according to his works"* (Rom. 2, 6).

In the second petition of the Our Father (Thy kingdom come) — and in the glorious mysteries of the rosary, we pray particularly that we may enter Heaven.

It is quite reasonable that in heaven some will be more happy than others. The apostles deserve and enjoy a greater glory than those who were converted only on their death-bed. The martyrs deserve and enjoy more happiness than the infants that die shortly after baptism. He who has done greater good, has greater merit, and deserves greater reward, for God is just, and gives to each one what he deserves. (2 Cor. 9, 6.) If you sow only a small patch of ground, you cannot expect so great a crop as he who sows a whole acre. (Rom. 2, 6.)

2. In heaven there is no envy, no jealousy, for there is no sin there. All is love. Each one rejoices not only at his own happiness, but also at the happiness of all the rest, and praises God for it all.—(Comparison with children that get gifts, etc., at Christmas; all are happy; the little ones do not envy the bigger ones because they have bigger clothes, etc.)

3. We should all our life have a yearning for heaven. He who does nothing to gain it, will not

enter it. We should pray God to help us to gain it, reciting for this purpose the Our Father (Thy Kingdom come), and the second and fourth glorious mysteries of the rosary. Let us ask the Blessed Virgin to obtain for us a holy death, by saying often the Hail Mary (pray for us—at the hour of our death). We should especially work for heaven by avoiding sin and sinful company, by keeping the commandments, by (enumerate). Do not be satisfied with doing for heaven what is absolutely necessary, but do many more things that will not cost you so much. Do not say: "I'm satisfied, if I can only get inside the door." Let everything you do be done for heaven; every little thing will then make you richer and happier there; for instance, bow at the name of Jesus, or in passing before a church, bear pain with patience, perform some little acts of mortification for the love of the Child Jesus, etc. The happiness of heaven is called life everlasting. Life means enjoyment; and life everlasting means enjoyment without end, which is promised to those who keep the commandments.

Hell.

168. What is hell?

Hell is the place of eternal torments.

Hell is the last of the four last things, but the most terrible of all, the most to be feared. I will explain it to you, because it is necesary that you should dread it above all, and do all you can to avoid it. How terrible the thought that perhaps one of you may have the misfortune of being condemned to it and suffering its torments.

Hell is a place of the greatest pains, called torments. There is no end to the torments of hell. All pain is disagreeable, especially if it lasts a long

time. But in hell the pains are countless, and most dreadful and have no end.

169. In what do the torments of the damned chiefly consist?

The torments of the damned chiefly consist in this, that for all eternity

1) they enjoy no happiness,
2) they cannot see and love God,
3) they burn in everlasting fire.

"These shall go into everlasting punishment" (Matt. 25, 46) *into the hell of unquenchable fire: "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not extinguished"* (Mark. 9, 44. 45).

1. The damned enjoy no pleasure whatever. God made us to become happy; we always seek happiness. Therefore God causes the good to enjoy eternal happiness in heaven. Not so in hell, where He punishes the guilty. Never does a ray of light enter that dark and dismal prison; if it did, it would give some pleasure to the damned. They shall never see anything beautiful or lovely, all in hell is unspeakably horrid and hideous. The damned shall never hear a kind word, for in hell there is only cursing and blaspheming.

2. The damned cannot see or love God. They know that they were created to see and enjoy God, and they would wish to go to Him, but they hear forever the sentence: "Depart from Me, ye cursed." God forever repulses them. They cannot even for one moment see or love Him. They can no longer call Him Father, as they did when on earth; they cannot call Mary Mother! If God would let them see Him as He is, even only for a moment, they would willingly continue to suffer, and hell would no longer be a hell to them.

3. The damned shall burn forever in hell.

There is real fire in hell; Jesus Christ says so. The bodies and souls of the damned will be in that fire, like fish (like a sponge) in water; and fire will be all through them. If some one would offer you $1,000,000 to hold your hand for a quarter of an hour in a glowing fire, you would say: "I would not do it for all the money in the world." And now think of being forever plunged into the fire of hell! What terrible sufferings! The damned will howl for pain, but it will be of no use; they shall burn without ever being consumed.

4. The most terrible thing in hell is its eternity. The pains of hell never grow less, never cease, not even for a moment. After billions of years the torments of the damned will be no nearer their end, but will be only, as it were, in their beginning. If we were to write down on the board a number that would reach from one end to the other, who would count it? Who could even enumerate it? And yet the damned will suffer as many years as such a number contains units, and eternity will only be in its beginning! The fire of hell is unquenchable. (Matt. 25, 46.) (Mark 9, 44, 45.) There are many other torments in hell besides fire! The loathsome company of the devils and the damned; their fearful howling and cursing; eternal night and darkness; eternal hunger and thirst. The rich man in hell in vain asked for the finger of Lazarus dipped in water to touch his burning tongue. The soul also has its peculiar torments. You do something very wicked, you feel remorse—your conscience reproaches you interiorly. In hell remorse, like a worm that never dies, gnaws forever at the conscience of the damned; it tells them that they could so easily have been saved, but that they are damned through their own fault, and that, too, forever. This thought fills them with fright-

ful despair; and they will seek death, but shall never find it, for hell is eternal.

170. Will the damned suffer equal pains?

The damned will not suffer equal pains; those who sinned more, will also be punished more severely.

The damned will suffer in proportion to their sins. Those who have sinned less, will suffer less; but those who have sinned much, will suffer much. Each mortal sin will have its own pain, and there will be a greater pain for every mortal sin more grievous than the others. The damned who received greater graces in life, will suffer more than the others, for they knew better and had more helps to do better. A Christian will suffer more than a pagan. A child well instructed by his parents will suffer more than one whose parents neglected to instruct him.

All this shows us what a wicked thing mortal sin is. God is so just, so good, so merciful, and yet He so terribly punishes mortal sin. In this world God is always so ready to forgive the sinner, even when he is dying, if he repents. But if the sinner will not repent and ask God's forgivenes, and dies thus, he remains forever in mortal sin, and is deserving of the torments of hell. He who commits a mortal sin and wilfully remains in it, knows that he deserves hell and will surely be condemned to it, unless he repents; he knows that he who does not repent even at death, will be damned forever. The sin may last only for a moment, but the impenitent sinner is so wicked that he wills to sin forever; he therefore never deserves pardon. Even on earth human laws fix capital punishment or a life's sentence for certain crimes that last but a moment.

If there were no hell, men could mock God fearlessly, and no one could feel secure in life or property. It is God's mercy that there is a hell, otherwise very few indeed would go to heaven. The majority of men reach heaven through the fear of hell. Let us often think of hell and its torments, and fear it during life, and we shall escape it after death.

Application. *"In all thy works remember thy last end, and thou shalt never sin"* (Eccl. 7, 40). — Often think: I must die, and know not where, nor how, nor when. My body will decay; my soul is immortal. I will therefore take more care of my soul than of my body. I will save my soul, else I shall be lost eternally.

(Quote Eccl. 7, 40.) If you do all this faithfully, you will have nothing to fear, but will fear only sin. Think often on death; how certain it is, and how uncertain its time, place and manner. As life is, so is death. Death in mortal sin is followed by the everlasting torments of hell. Our body will rot, be eaten up by worms, and turn into dust.— What shall we have of all we have done for our body! But what we do for our soul will last forever. Let us try to beautify and enrich our soul every day more and more. Our soul, if once lost, shall be forever lost! Let us say: "I will save my soul, cost what it may. I will do all that the catechism teaches; I will serve God faithfully all the days of my life, and thus surely gain heaven."

AMEN.

Amen is the last word of the Creed and of our prayers. It is a Hebrew word that means: it is so; be it so; I believe it firmly. When we say it after the words—life everlasting, it expresses our wish to enjoy that life of happiness. May it be so for all, for each one of us!

PART II.

We must keep the Commandments.

The Commandment of the Love of God.

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind, and with thy whole strength.

The first part of the catechism tells us what we must believe in order to gain heaven. The second part tells us what we must do to gain heaven. We must keep the commandments God has given us. We are bound to obey God, for He made us and we belong to Him. We must obey Him more than our parents, more than any one else, because He is above all. God gave us ten commandments. One day a lawyer asked our Lord, which is the greatest commandment. Jesus answered: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind, and with thy whole strength." This commandment is called the commandment of the love of God. Love comes from the heart; therefore we should love God with all our heart. We should love God with our whole soul, that is, we should often and willingly think of God. We should love God with all our mind, that is, with all our affections, and be eager to go to Him. We should love God with all our strength, that is, we ought to perform all our actions for the love of Him.

171. How should we love God?

We should love God above all things.

"He that loveth father or mother more than Me, is not worthy of Me" (Matt. 10, 37). He loves God above all things, who is willing to give up all things, if God should demand it.

Children like play, sweetmeats, pictures. But they love far more their brothers and sisters, and still more their father and mother. But we should love God more than all else. Our Lord says (Matt. 10, 37), that he who does not love Him more than he loves his father and mother, is not worthy to be with Him, that is, is not worthy to go to heaven. A man does not willingly give away what he loves very much. He who gives alms to the poor, or donations to the church, shows that he loves God more than his money. People love their life more than their money, and rather give up their money than their life. He who gives up his life for God, as the martyrs did, proves that he loves God more than his life, more than himself. (Relate how Abraham proved that he loved God more than he loved his son Isaac.)

172. Why should we love God?

We should love God

1) because He created, redeemed and sanctified us,
2) because He preserves us and daily gives us many blessings.

"God so loved the world, as to give His only-begotten Son" (John 3, 16). *"Every best gift, and every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights"* (Jas. 1, 17). *"Let us therefore love God, because God first hath loved us"* (I. John 4, 19).

1. We should love God, because He has done so much for us. He created us, gave us life, a

body, a soul, our senses. God also redeemed us from sin and hell, loving us so much, as to give His only begotten Son for us. And God the Son suffered and died for us. A rich man once found in the street a poor child clothed in rags, and took him home and clothed him in fine clothes and treated him as his own child. God did the same to our souls by clothing them with sanctifying grace and making us His children in holy baptism.

2. God constantly heaps favors upon us, for He preserves us. If He were to withdraw His power from us for even one moment, we should all go back to nothing. How many favors does not God bestow on us? Food, health, the use of our senses, and so many graces of salvation. (See above James 1, 17.) There was once a man who had given up his religion and no longer loved God. A friend of his, named Giles, one day took him to see a sick man who had lost his hands and was also blind. Giles said to the sick man: "If some one would now come to give you back your sight and your hands, would you not love him?" The sick man replied: "Yes, and I would, as long as I live, do all I could for him." Giles then said to the man who had no religion: "God has given and preserved your sight and all the members of your body, besides numberless other favors. Should you not then love Him above all things?" This converted that man, and he loved God all the rest of his life. God has been so good to us, and this without any benefit on His part, for He does not need us; (therefore 1 John 4, 19).

173. How do we show that we love God?

We show that we love God by doing His holy will.

"He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them: he it is that loveth Me" (John 14, 21). *"This is the charity of God, that we keep His commandments"* (I. John 5, 3).

We all wish to love God; it is our sacred duty. St. Paul says: "If any one love not our Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema." But if we love God truly, we will do His will. How do you know whether you love your parents? If you merely say to them, "I love you," that is not yet a proof of your love. You really love them, when you try to please them, when you do what they tell you. In like manner, it is not enough to say to God: "My God, I love Thee," we must also obey Him, try to please Him by keeping His commandments. (See above John 14, 21 and 1 John 5, 3.)

Application. Think often of God, love to pray to Him, do and suffer all things for the love of God. Avoid sin, because it offends God; thus you will love Him, and He will love you.

If we love God we shall often think of God, we shall love to be with Him, to speak to Him, that is to pray to Him; we shall offer all we do and suffer to Him; we shall avoid all that displeases Him, that is, all sin, even the smallest. Let us often say: "O my God, I love Thee above all things."

The Commandment of the Love of Our Neighbor.

Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

After Jesus had mentioned the first and greatest commandment of the love of God, He added: "And the second is like the first: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." God considers this commandment as important as the first.

174. Who is our neighbor?

Our neighbor is everybody without exception.

Neighbor, in the words of our Lord, does not mean a person living next door to us, or near us, but all our fellow-men, and includes men of every country, of every religion, of every color, of every state of life. We are commanded, then, to love all men.

175. When do we love our neighbor?

We love our neighbor when we wish him well and do good to him when we can.

"All things whatsoever you would that men should do to you, do you also to them" (Matt. 7, 12).

1. We should wish well to our neighbor. We do so when we say to him: "Good morning." We wish well to some one, if we are glad that he is well, that he is prosperous; if we are sorry to hear that he is ill, or has met with misfortune.

2. We should also do good to him. If a boy would come to you and say: "I have had nothing to eat for two days, and I am so hungry." Would you show him love, if you merely said to him: "I am sorry for you?" You could prove your love only by procuring him some food. We should treat others as we would wish them to treat us. Such is the commandment of our Lord (Matt. 7, 12). Let us avoid doing anything to grieve our neighbor; let us not rejoice at his misfortunes, v. g., if a boy or a girl gets punished in school, let us not laugh. If you cannot do much for your neighbor, you can do a little; at least be kind to him.

3. Although we do not know all the men living in the world, we can love them all, by wishing well to them all, by praying for them.

4. You should love even the wicked, but not their wickedness. It is not necessary that you should go in their company; in fact, you must avoid their company, because you must not love their wickedness.

5. We must not love all men alike; we should love our parents, our relatives, our superiors, our benefactors more than others, more than strangers.

176. Why should we love all men?

We should love all men

1) because God loves them,

2) because God has commanded us to love them.

We have *one common Father* — hence we are brothers and sisters — one Redeemer, who died for all — and *one Heaven* for all.

1. If we truly love God, we will love all that He loves. God loves all men, for He created them and loads them with His benefits.

2. We are bound to do what God commands us. We must therefore love all men. God has put the commandment of the love of our neighbor on a par with that of the love of God, as you heard before. Jesus said also: "This is My commandment, that you love one another. In this shall men know that ye are My disciples, if you love one another. A new commandment I give you, that you love one another as I have loved you." St. John the Evangelist, when very old, could not preach long sermons, but he would repeat many times: "My little children, love one another." The people got tired of hearing him say always the same thing, and complained about it. He replied: "My little children, love one another; if you do this, you will do all that is required."

3. We should love one another, because we all have the same origin, for we all are children of Adam, and therefore related to each other. We also all have the same Father in heaven, God Himself.

4. Jesus Christ died for all men; He shed all His blood for each one, because He loves each one. We should, then, love every one without exception.

5. All men are destined for heaven; God wishes that they should all be our companions in heaven for all eternity. We should therefore begin now to love every one and to interest ourselves in every one's welfare. (Society of the Holy Infancy a means of saving thousands of children.)

177. Why must we love our enemies?

We must love our enemies, because Christ has expressly commanded it.

"Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you: and pray for them that persecute and calumniate you" (Matt. 5, 44).

Our enemies are also our neighbor. We must, then, love them also, says our Lord, "that we may be children of our heavenly Father, who maketh His sun to rise upon the good and bad, and raineth upon the just and the unjust." (Ibid. 45.)

178. How do we show that we love our enemies?

We show that we love our enemies

1) by forgiving them from our hearts,
2) by assisting them in their necessities,
3) by praying for them.

The example of Christ, who bestowed blessings on His enemies, and when dying, prayed for them.

"If you will not forgive men: neither will your Father forgive you your offences" (Matt. 6, 15). Christ commanded us to forgive our enemy "not only till seven times:

but till seventy times seven times" (Matt. 18, 22). *"Revenge is mine:...saith the Lord"* (Rom. 12, 19).

The good Samaritan. St. Stephen.

1. If any one offends us in any way, we are bound to forgive him, not merely with our lips, but also with our heart. We must try to overcome any ill-feeling in our heart against him.

2. We are bound to help our enemy in need. We should not rejoice at his misfortune, but sympathize with him, for our Lord wills that we render good for evil. Years ago during the cholera epidemic in Paris a bad man insulted and almost struck a Sister of Charity. A few days later this man was attacked by the cholera and was brought to the hospital. There the same Sister took charge of him and day and night cared for him so well, that he was cured. The Sister thus showed her love for her enemy. The man was very sorry that he had insulted the Sister, and when she died later, he used to go every day to the cemetery to pray for her over her grave.

3. We must pray for our enemies. This Jesus did, when He was hanging on the cross dying, and His enemies were insulting Him most shamefully, He prayed thus: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they are doing." He even excused their wickedness. When the Jews were stoning St. Stephen to death, he prayed to our Lord not to hold them responsible for the sin they were committing. Thus must we also act, for, if we do not forgive our enemies, God will not forgive us. When we say the Our Father, we ask God to forgive us as we forgive those who offend us. If we do not forgive, we ask God not to forgive us; but if we forgive, we have a sure claim on God's forgiveness. It is a sin not to forgive; it is a greater sin to bear wilful spite or hatred

to any one; and a yet greater sin to take or seek revenge.—We should imitate, says our Lord, the example of the good Samaritan. The Jews and Samaritans were enemies. One day a Samaritan traveling saw a Jew who had been robbed and almost murdered by robbers. He took the wounded man dressed his wounds, brought him to an inn and paid to have him cared for.

Application. *"Let us not love in word, nor in tongue"* (alone), *"but in deed, and in truth"* (I. John 3, 18).—*"If you love them"* (only) *"that love you, what reward shall you have?"* (Matt. 5, 45).—*"Therefore,....let us work good to all men, but especially to those who are of the household of the faith"* (Gal. 6, 19).

1. Our love for our neighbor should consist not in mere words, but in deeds, otherwise it would not be real and sincere.

2. We should love all men, not because they do us good, but because God wills it.

3. We should show special love to those of the same faith, that is, to Catholics. Our Lord considers as done to Himself all that we do to our fellowmen. "Whatever you do to the least of My brethren, you do it unto Me."

The Ten Commandments of God.

179. Which are the ten commandments?

1) I am the Lord thy God. Thou shalt not have strange gods before me; thou shalt not make to thyself any graven thing to adore it.

2) Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.

3) Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day.
4) Honor thy father and thy mother, that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.
5) Thou shalt not kill.
6) Thou shalt not commit adultery.
7) Thou shalt not steal.
8) Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.
9) Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife.
10) Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, nor his field, nor his servant, nor his handmaid, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is his.

These ten commandments are an explanation of the two great commandments of the love of God and of the love of our neighbor. They were given by God to Moses on Mount Sinai, that Moses might make them known to the Israelites. Moses wrote them down on tables of stone. From the very beginning of the world men were bound to keep the ten commandments. Although not previously written down on stone or in books, they were written and are yet written in the hearts of men. The ten commandments were written on two tables of stone, the first three, which contain our duties toward God, were written on one of them, and the other seven, which contain our duties toward our neighbor, were written on the other.

180. Give a short summary of the ten commandments.

1) Thou shalt adore only one God.
2) Thou shalt not dishonor the name of God.

3) Thou shalt keep holy the Lord's day.
4) Thou shalt honor thy father and thy mother.
5) Thou shalt not kill.
6) Thou shalt not commit sins of impurity.
7) Thou shalt not steal.
8) Thou shalt not lie.
9) Thou shalt not take pleasure in impure thoughts or desires.
10) Thou shalt not unjustly desire thy neighbor's goods.

First Commandment of God.

Thou shalt adore only one God.

181. What are we commanded by the first commandment?

By the first commandment we are commanded to believe in God, to hope in Him, to love, and to adore Him.

By the first commandment God commands us to have faith, hope, charity and to adore Him.

Faith.

182. What means: to have faith?

To have faith, means: to hold as true all that God has revealed.

This has been explained in the beginning of the catechism. Those who will not believe what God has revealed, act as if they charged God with lying. Those who refuse to believe a truth God has revealed, although they may believe all the others, are guilty of grievous sin.

183. How do we show our faith outwardly?

We show our faith outwardly

1) by professing it,

2) by doing what it teaches.

"Every one therefore that shall confess Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in Heaven." (Matt. 10, 32). *"What shall it profit, my brethren, if a man say he hath faith, but hath not works?"* — *"As the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead"* (Jas. 2, 14. 26). — The sign of the cross.

Faith is in the soul and cannot itself be seen. But it can show itself outwardly by its effects, that is, when we act according to our faith.

1. We can show our faith by professing it by our words. We need not, however, tell every one we meet, that we are Catholics. A man went on a Friday into a restaurant for his dinner, and saw nothing but meat on the table. He told the waiter to bring him something else. The waiter asked him: "Are you a Catholic?" He replied: "Don't trouble yourself about my religion, but only about my stomach." So when through mere curiosity or for the purpose of making fun of us, some one asks us about our religion, we may let them know that it is none of their business. But we must never deny our religion, for that would be very sinful. We can silently profess our religion by making the sign of the cross, or by taking off our hat or bowing when we pass before a church. We are bound to profess our faith when questioned by lawful authority, when the glory of God, or our neighbor's good requires it, for our Lord says: "Whosoever shall confess Me before men, him shall the Son of man confess before the angels of God. But he that shall deny Me before men, shall be denied before the angels of God." (Luke 12, 8, 9.)

2. We are bound to do what our faith teaches, that is, we are bound to live up to our faith; in other words we must be practical Catholics. A practical Catholic keeps the commandments of God and the precepts of the Church (enumerate). Faith alone cannot save us; it must be practical, for St. James says (text given above).

184. How do we sin against faith?

We sin against faith

1) by doubting in matters of faith,
2) by speaking against faith,
3) by denying the faith,
4) by abandoning the faith.

To abandon = to give up, to apostatize.

1. It is a grievous sin to entertain doubts wilfully in matters of faith; for instance, wilfully to think—that perhaps it is not true that the priest has the power to forgive sins.

2. It is a grievous sin to speak against faith; for instance, to say, "I am not so stupid as to believe all that the priests teach or preach." To listen wilfully or approvingly to others talking against faith is also a grievous sin. When some one speaks thus in your presence, either try to stop him, if you can, or leave the company; or, if you cannot, show by your countenance, that you do not like to hear such talk. God often punishes religion-scoffers even in this life. In a certain town in Texas four infidels used to scoff often at religion. One of them was found dead, eaten up by worms, in a forest. Another was run over and killed by a train; a third committed suicide, and the fourth perished miserably when on a journey.

3. It is a very grievous sin to deny our faith, just like the sin of St. Peter, when he denied our

Lord. It is a denial of the faith to give one's self out as a non-Catholic, as a Protestant, no matter for what reason, also to take part in Protestant service.

4. It is a fearful sin to abandon, to give up the faith, for he who does this, renounces all rights to the sacraments, to divine grace, and gives up all claim to heaven. A Methodist preacher once promised a Catholic Indian plenty of money if he would turn Methodist. The Indian said: "How much will you give me?" The preacher said: "$200." "I want more," said the Indian. "I'll give you $500." "Not enough." "Well, I'll give you $1,000." "I want more." "Well, how much do you want?" "As much as my soul is worth, for if I gave up my faith, I would lose my soul." The preacher could not reply, and went away. Our soul is worth more than the whole world; and, therefore, we should not lose it by giving up our faith even for the whole world.

185. Which are the chief causes why people abandon the faith?

The chief causes why people abandon the faith are:

1) associating with non-Catholics, or with persons who have given up their religion,
2) reading bad books and papers.

Leading a wicked life — neglecting prayer, divine service and the sacraments.

1. When we are often with certain persons, we soon begin to think and act as they do. Therefore, we risk losing our faith if we go often with non-Catholics or apostates, if we contract marriage with them, or join societies to which heretics, infidels

and Jews belong. Some Catholics boast that such associations do them no harm. This is not a bit more true than to say that a person in a flour mill can keep his clothes from being whitened by the flour. Under a tree near a city in France, the corpse of a young man was found. Near it there was the revolver with which he had committed suicide. In his pocket there was a note, which read as follows: "When a child, I was pious and happy; and, O how happy I felt on the day of my first holy Communion! For the next five years I practised my religion and went regularly to church and to confession and to Communion. After that I began to associate with companions who had given up the faith, and I soon lost my faith and my happiness. Now, in despair, I intend to kill myself. I beg pardon of all, but especially of the good priest who prepared me for my first holy Communion. Oh if I had only followed his counsels and shunned bad company!"

2. Bad books and papers endanger our faith. Some are godless, denying God and all faith; others are heretical, or Protestant. The worst are the impure and obscene. They first ruin the virtue and morals of their readers, and then their faith. We are not allowed to read, keep, lend, sell, or give away such books, but must burn or destroy them. The same is to be said about bad papers and periodicals, or magazines. Those who lead a wicked life, who are impure, risk losing their faith. In fact, young men, young women never lose their faith while they remain pure. Those who lose their faith, first lose their purity. Before such persons lose their faith altogether, they begin by staying away from confession and holy Communion, from Mass on Sundays, and give up saying their prayers. Some persons give up their faith for the sake of

making money, for a rich marriage, and the like. When we give up our faith, we give up all rights to heaven. We should rather suffer as the martyrs (St. Lawrence, the forty martyrs) did, rather than lose our faith

Hope.

186. What means: to hope in God?

To hope in God, means: to trust firmly that He will give us all that He has promised.

To hope means to expect something. We hope in God, that is, we expect firmly that He will help us in our wants and give us all that He has promised.

187. What has God promised?

God has promised

1) to pardon our sins,
2) to give us the necessary graces,
3) to hear our prayers,
4) to take us into Heaven.

We hope for something good; we fear what is evil. Heaven is the greatest good we can hope for. To reach heaven we must first obtain the forgiveness of our sins, then the necessary helps or graces; for these we must hope, and also that God will hear our prayers.

1. God is infinitely merciful, as we have seen (question 25), and has repeatedly promised to forgive the sins of all who repent sincerely of them.

2. As we cannot gain heaven by our own unaided efforts, God has promised us His help, His grace. By sanctifying grace, which we receive in baptism or recover in the sacrament of penance, we become His children and heirs of heaven. Then

He gives daily also actual graces for every good work.

3. Our Lord repeatedly promised to hear our prayers: "Ask, and you shall receive.—Amen, amen, I say unto you, whatsoever you shall ask of the Father in My name He will give it to you." God will refuse no grace of salvation to our prayers. He will even give us the necessary temporal benefits we pray for, for He has taught us in the Our Father to pray God to "give us our daily bread."

4. God wills that all men should be saved. It was for this that He created them, that the Son of God died for them. But to be saved, we also must will it, and do all in our power to gain heaven; if we do our part, God will help us by His all powerful grace. We can, then, be sure of success.

188. Why should we firmly hope in God?

We should firmly hope in God, because He is all-powerful, good and faithful.

He is all-powerful, therefore He *can* give us everything; good, therefore He *loves* to give us everything; faithful, therefore He *will* give us everything that He has promised.

There was a man who was very poor and in need of money to keep himself and his family from starving. He had three neighbors. One of them, his best friend, was also very poor, and could not help him, although he was very willing to do so. Another had plenty of money, but he was a miser, and would not give him a cent. The third was rich, and also generous, and had often told the poor man to come to him whenever he was in need. Hence the poor man said to himself: "I will go to him, because he is rich and can help me, he will help me, because he loves me; and also because he promised to do so." (Apply this to our spiritual wants and to God.)

189. When do we sin against hope?

We sin against hope when we

1) do not hope at all,
2) do not hope firmly,
3) hope too much,
4) hope superstitiously.

To have no hope, that God will forgive us our sins or take us to Heaven = *Despair.*

To hope too much, placing ourselves deliberately in danger and trusting that God will save us = *Presumption.*

1. Those have no hope, or despair, who, like Cain and Judas, think that their sins are too great for God to forgive them, or that God is not willing to show them mercy. This is a very grievous sin and leads to hell.

2. Those who doubt that God will forgive them, or that He will not grant them the graces they need and pray for, sin by not hoping firmly.

3. Those are guilty of presumption who fancy that they will surely go to heaven, no matter what they do, or who wilfully and unnecessarily expose themselves to the danger of sinning grievously; or who sin repeatedly, trusting that God will forgive many sins as easily as a few; or who put off their conversion and continue to live in sin, expecting that God will later, or even at death, give them the grace of conversion and forgive them their sins. God promised to forgive, but not to give time for delayed repentance. It is also a sin of presumption to refuse in serious illness all remedies, hoping that God will surely cure us, if we pray to Him (faith cure—so-called Christian science).

190. Who hopes superstitiously?

He hopes superstitiously who places his trust

in foolish things that have no power from God, and that are disapproved of by the Church.

Cures by magic words; preservation from sickness and sudden death by wearing charms; believing in dreams; fortune-telling; mediums; spiritism — horse-shoe, etc.

It is superstition to consider Friday as an unlucky day; to look upon as unlucky that thirteen sit down to eat at one table, that the salt-cellar is upset, and the like; to believe in dreams, to keep or consult dream books, to nail a horse-shoe under or above the door-sill for good luck, to have anything to do with so-called prayers that are said to preserve from all kinds of disease and misfortune, to consult fortune-tellers, to wear charms, and the like. All this is foolish, for God has not destined those things to produce such effects; it is, moreover, sinful, because God forbids it, and the Church, therefore, disapproves of it. It is very sinful to have anything to do with spiritism, trying to consult the dead, or their spirits. Most of this is mere humbug, and what is not humbug, is usually devilish. God often punishes those who seek to be cured by superstitious practices, for it often happens that such sick persons die.

Love.

191. How do we sin against the love of God?

We sin against the love of God

1) when we are ungrateful for His benefits,
2) when we are dissatisfied with what God sends.

Every sin we commit is against the love we owe to God. The greatest of all sins would be to hate God. Only the devils and the damned in hell and satanic men on earth hate God.

1. All the good things we have both in body and soul, both for this life and the next, are gifts of God. We should never forget to thank Him every day, morning and night, for all these gifts.

2. We should be satisfied with what God sends us; even if He does not give as much to us as to others, or sends us sickness and misfortune, for He knows what is best for us, and He is our good, loving Father. To murmur against God for any suffering or inconvenience, is sinful.

Adoration.

192. What means: to adore God?

To adore God, means: to give Him the highest honor, because He is the Most High, the Lord of all things.

To honor a person is to think well of him. God deserves the highest honor. We adore Him, or give Him the highest honor, when we think of the goodness, power and other perfections of God, that He created us and all things, that He is our Lord and that we must obey Him in all things. We are not allowed to adore any one but God, not even the saints or the Blessed Virgin herself. The heathens adore many gods—false gods; they are idolaters.

193. How do we adore God outwardly?

We adore God outwardly

1) when we assist at divine service,
2) when we receive the sacraments,
3) when we recite vocal prayers.

To kneel in prayer, to fold the hands, to genuflect, etc.
Vocal = that which is spoken.

God created not only our soul, but also our body. We must then adore God not only in our mind

and heart, but also with our body. We do this by kneeling, etc. Just like the face or dial of the watch or clock shows the time, that is, the workings of the machinery inside, so our body should show by its actions and position what goes on in our mind and heart when we adore God. (Another comparison—from taking off the hat, or bowing when a person is saluted.)

1. Public divine service is held in church, when the priest says Mass, when Vespers are sung, Benediction given or a procession takes place.

2. Receiving the sacraments—such as baptism, confirmation, holy Communion—is an act of exterior or outward adoration.

3. Also the prayers we recite with our lips, with hands joined, knees bent.

194. How do we sin against the worship which we owe God?

We sin against the worship which we owe God

1) when we neglect to attend divine service,
2) when we do not pray,
3) when we commit a sacrilege.

1. We are bound under pain of mortal sin to assist at Mass on Sundays and Holy days; if we neglect this through our fault, it is a grievous sin. Children are also bound to go to Mass on other days and to other divine services, if their parents send them.

2. We should pray every day, morning and evening. Those persons who never say a prayer for two months, surely commit a mortal sin deserving of hell. (St. Alphonsus.)

195. Who commits a sacrilege?

He commits a sacrilege who desecrates anything that is blessed, or consecrated to God.

Desecrates = abuses.
Persons (priests, religious), *things* (sacraments, chalice, rosary), *places* (church, cemetery).

1. To God belongs all that is blessed or consecrated to Him. Such are holy, and must be treated or used in a holy manner. The Pope, bishops, priests and religious are consecrated to God. It is then a sacrilege—a fearful sin, to strike them with malice, to ill-treat or kill them.

2. He commits a fearful sacrilege who receives a sacrament unworthily—in the state of mortal sin, such as holy Communion, confirmation, marriage: also he is guilty of sacrilege who misuses, profanes a chalice, the sacred vestments, and especially the Blessed Sacrament, etc. (Punishment of Balthassar—Mene, Thekel, Phares.)

3. They commit sacrilege who break into a church and destroy it or things in it, kill, plunder or steal therein; also all who desecrate cemeteries by committing some crime therein.

Application. Preserve your faith, shun whatever is dangerous to it. If you lose your faith—all is lost. In all necessities of body and soul, place your confidence in God. Never use forbidden, or superstitious means to cure diseases, to obtain riches or to discover hidden things.

Your faith is the greatest and most indispensable gift of God in this life. Make every sacrifice, even give up your life, as the martyrs did, rather than lose your faith. Show to God a childlike confidence in all your wants, and He will take care of you, protect you, and give you all the means to gain heaven.

Veneration of Saints.

196. Why is it pleasing God to honor the saints?

It is pleasing God to honor the saints because

they are in Heaven with God, and are His special friends.

God Himself sanctified the saints — and now honors them in Heaven.

The saints are the dead who are in heaven with God. They are innumerable. Some of them were our relatives, etc., on earth. We venerate only those saints whom we know to be for certain in heaven. The Bible tells us of some, and others have been canonized, that is, declared to be saints, by the Pope, the Vicar of Christ. Sometimes, when a very holy person dies, the Pope orders a most strict examination into his life, and if it is clearly proved that he was in all things very holy, and that God performed real miracles through his intercession after his death, the Pope canonizes him. All this takes many years.

When we honor the saints, we please God, because they are His friends, and He honors them Himself in heaven and hears their prayers for us.

197. Which is the best manner of honoring the saints?

The best manner of honoring the saints is

1) to implore their intercession,
2) to imitate their examples,
3) to honor their relics and pictures.

Patron saints, patrons of the church and of sodalities.
Relics = remains of the body (bones) or of anything pertaining to the saints, e. g. clothing, instruments of martyrdom. The most precious relic is a particle (small piece) of the Holy Cross.—Feasts of saints.

1. We honor the saints when we pray to them to help us, to obtain our cure, and the like. The saints know that we pray to them, for they take an interest in us, just like the angels who know and rejoice when a sinner is converted. The saints

can help us, because God who loves them, will not refuse what they ask for us. Hence if what we pray to the saints for is not hurtful to our soul or salvation, it will surely be obtained through them. —A pious girl was troubled much with impure temptations and by some bad young men living in the same house. She prayed fervently to the Blessed Virgin not to let her fall into sin. And soon the temptations vanished and the bad young men left the house.—A good boy was anxious to become a priest, but his parents would not hear of it. He prayed to St. Joseph to help him, and his parents consented. But they were too poor to pay for his education. He prayed again to St. Joseph, and soon some good people paid for his education, and he became a good priest.—A doctor had bought a house from a merchant, paid for it and received a receipt. Some years after the merchant died and his son demanded payment of the doctor for the house. The doctor said he had paid for it, but could not find the receipt. He prayed to St. Anthony, and going to his library he took out a book, and found the receipt in it.

2. We should imitate the examples of the saints in keeping the commandments of God and of the Church, and in doing all we can to save our souls. We should especially honor and imitate our patron saint, whose name was given us at baptism or confirmation. Some saints are noted for helping in certain wants. St. Joseph is honored and invoked especially as the patron of a good death; St. Anthony, to find lost things; St. Blasius, for diseases of the throat; Sts. Agatha and Florian, against fire; St. Otilia, for sore eyes; St. John Nepomucene, in seasons of drought.

3. We should honor the relics of the saints. By relics we mean pieces of their bones, of some-

thing they wore or used during life. Every altar at which the priest says Mass must contain relics of the bodies of the martyrs, such as a piece of their bones, or some of the ashes found in their graves. The most precious relics are those of our Lord, v. g., particles (small pieces) of His cross, His crown of thorns. If people in the world honor the pictures of their parents, of those they love, if they revere relics of great patriots, of statesmen and other great personages, why should they find fault with Catholics for honoring the pictures and relics of Christ and His saints!—We can honor the saints by celebrating their feasts, v. g., by hearing Mass, by going to holy Communion.

198. Why do we honor the images of Christ and of the saints?

We honor the images of Christ and of the saints

1) because they remind us of Christ and of the saints,

2) because whilst looking at them we can pray with greater devotion.

A good child honors the pictures of its parents, brothers and sisters. In every Christian home, there ought to be, at least, a crucifix, an image of the Blessed Virgin, or of the Holy Family.

Crucifix = a Cross with an image of the Lord on it.

1. When we look at a crucifix, we are reminded of our Lord dying on the cross out of love for us, to save us from sin and hell. When we look at a picture of the Blessed Virgin, we are reminded of Mary, the Mother of Jesus and our Mother also, who is so full of love for us, and who is all-powerful by her prayers. The honor we pay to the holy pictures is paid in reality to the saints represented

by them, and the honor we pay to the saints goes back to God, whose friends, etc., they are.

2. The sight of a crucifix, of any holy picture, helps us to pray better, because it keeps holy thoughts before our mind, and prevents us from being distracted by vain and worldly thoughts. Holy pictures are frequently a good sermon to us; for instance, the crucifix teaches us patience in suffering, love of God for us, the value of our soul, the malice of mortal sin.—There was a woman who was a perfect slave to the passion of anger. A person once sent her "The Life of Christ" with the words on the fly-leaf: "For a sure cure of anger see page —." The woman looked at that page, and saw there the picture of our Lord crowned with thorns, and Pilate pointing to Him, saying: "Behold the man." Below the picture was written: "Whenever you feel getting angry, look at this picture for three minutes, and recite three Our Fathers." The woman tried this, and was cured of her anger.

In every house there should be a crucifix, a picture of the Blessed Virgin, and other holy pictures. You can honor them by looking at them devoutly, by bowing to them, by kissing those that are small, by lighting a candle and praying before them.

The Blessed Virgin Mary.

199. Whom should we honor and invoke more than any other saint?

We should honor and invoke the Blessed Virgin Mary more than any other saint.

200. Why should we honor the Blessed Virgin more than any other saint?

We should honor the Blessed Virgin more than any other saint

1) because she is the Mother of God,
2) because she is also our Mother,
3) because she is the Queen of all the angels and saints,
4) because her intercession is most powerful.

"Behold from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. Because He that is mighty hath done great things to me" (Luke 1, 48, 49).

Hail Mary. Memorare. Hail Holy Queen. Litany of Loretto, or of the Blessed Virgin. Rosary. Medal. Scapular. Pictures of the Blessed Virgin. — May, October, Saturday — Feasts of the Blessed Virgin. Fourth and fifth glorious mysteries of the rosary: "The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary into Heaven." "The Coronation of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Heaven."

1. Mary is the Mother of God; she is then more nearly related to God than any other creature can be. She was and is allowed to call Jesus her Son, and Jesus called and calls her His Mother, and honors her as His Mother, and more than any other creature. Mary is the most worthy Mother of God, and, therefore, the holiest of creatures, for of her alone God said that she was "full of grace". She is, then, deserving of honor next to God.

2. Mary is also our Mother, since we are brethren of Jesus. He also gave her to us as our Mother in His last will, whilst He was dying on the cross. (We are her *adopted* children.)

3. Mary, as the Church sings, is the Queen of angels, patriarchs, etc., and of all the saints, for she is the Mother of the King of heaven and of the saints.

4. Mary is all powerful by her prayer. Jesus obeyed her on earth, and even performed His first miracle at her request, for He cannot refuse anything to His Mother, since He is the best of sons.

And Mary, being our Mother, also will not refuse to pray to God for us, when we ask her help in our wants of both body and soul.

When Mary visited St. Elizabeth, she sang the Magnificat, in which she foretold: "Behold from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed, because He that is mighty hath done great things to me." Yes, ever since then Mary has everywhere been called the "Blessed" Virgin and been specially honored all over the world. Let us honor her, first, by praying to her. Let us often say the Hail Mary, the most beautiful of prayers after the Our Father. Also the Memorare, the Hail, holy Queen, the Litany of Loretto, the rosary or beads. Let us wear or carry about us a blessed medal of the Blessed Virgin, the Scapular, a blessed rosary. Let us have some picture of her in our prayer-book, in our room. Let us honor her and pray to her especially during the month of May, consecrated to her, and the month of October, the rosary month. Let us also honor her particularly every Saturday, the day of the week specially dedicated to her. Let us also honor her on her principal feasts—The Immaculate Conception, Dec. 8; the Purification, February 2; the Annunciation, March 25; the Visitation, July 2; the Assumption, August 15; the Nativity, September 8; the Presentation, November 21; the holy Name of Mary, the Sunday after September 8; the Seven Dolors, Friday before Palm Sunday; Our Lady of Good Counsel, April 26; the Help of Christians, May 24; Our Lady of Perpetual Help, the Sunday following June 16; Our Lady of Mount Carmel, July 16; the Holy Rosary, first Sunday in October. Let us also love to recite the fourth and fifth mysteries of the rosary (Mary's Assumption and Coronation).

Application. Love to pray to the saints in Heaven.

Have a filial confidence in Mary, your heavenly Mother. Devoutly honor St. Joseph. Honor your patron saint and celebrate his feast. Strive to become holy like the saints. If they could become saints, you can also.

The saints are related to us, they are our brethren in Christ. If we pray much to them, they will also pray much for us. Praying much to them helps us to become like them. Love Mary as your own dear Mother; have a childlike confidence in her, and she will always be a good mother to you. Pray much to St. Joseph. Jesus greatly loved him and honored and obeyed him in all things when He was on earth, for St. Joseph was like a father to Him. Pray to St. Joseph to preserve you pure, to obtain for you the grace to pray well and to die a holy death. Often recite: "Jesus, Mary and Joseph, I give you my heart and my soul; Jesus, Mary and Joseph, assist me in my last agony; Jesus, Mary and Joseph, may I breathe forth my soul with you in peace" (300 days indulgence). Honor and pray daily to your own patron saint whose name you received in baptism, and celebrate his feast, and try to imitate his virtues, by often thinking of your baptism and baptismal vows. By doing this you will lead a holy life and also become a saint in heaven after death.

Second Commandment of God.

Thou shalt not dishonor the name of God.

201. How do we dishonor the name of God?

We dishonor the name of God

1) by pronouncing it irreverently,
2) by cursing,
3) by blaspheming,
4) by sinful swearing,
5) by breaking a vow.

God almighty, Great God, Jesus Christ. It is also sinful to pronounce irreverently the names of saints and holy things.

We should always pronounce the name of God with reverence. We pronounce it irreverently whenever we make an exclamation containing the name of God without intending it as a prayer.

202. What means: cursing?

Cursing means: to pronounce the name of God in anger and imprecation.

Imprecation = calling down evil on ourselves or others.

The worst curse is to ask God to damn our soul or the soul of some one else. Some people can scarcely say a few words without cursing. Never use such langauge; it is devilish, for the devils and the damned curse in hell. Shun all companions that curse, otherwise you will soon get the habit of cursing. Repress anger, and you will avoid one of the most frequent occasions of cursing. An old general was brought to the hospital suffering greatly from rheumatism and gout. When the pains were very great, he would utter fearful curses. The Sister who attended him said to him: "That is a sin." "I know it," he replied, "but I cannot help it, I cannot get rid of the habit." "Yes, you can," she said, "I know a sure remedy." "Well, tell me the remedy, and I will make use of it." "Every time you curse, give me a dollar for the poor." Oh, he thought, if I do that, I'll soon be as poor as a beggar; but I must keep my word. "Yes, Sister, I'll do it." A few moments later, his pains grew worse, and he cursed again. The Sister held out her hand, and the general gave her a dollar. That day he cursed a second time, and gave the Sister another dollar. The following days he

was so careful that he scarcely cursed any more. At last he gave up cursing altogether, after he had given in all only ten dollars to the Sister.

203. What means: blaspheming?

Blaspheming means: to speak impiously of God, of His saints, or of holy things.

The Jews blasphemed when they said that Jesus was possessed by the devil; also when they mocked Him as He was hanging on the cross. It is blasphemy to say that God is not good, not just, etc., to run down the saints, to make fun of the sacraments, of the ceremonies of the Church, to show contempt for God or holy things, or anger against them. Blasphemy is especially a devilish sin, more so than cursing, for it is far worse. In the Old Law the blasphemer was to be stoned to death. St. Louis, King of France, condemned blasphemers to have their lips pierced with a red-hot iron.

204. What means: swearing, or taking an oath?

Swearing, or taking an oath, means: to call God to witness, that we speak the truth.

So help me God. I swear, etc. Oath. To affirm on oath. To promise on oath. Solemn oath. Holding up your hand.

A just oath is no sin, but a profession of faith.

A witness is one who knows a thing and tells it to prove something to be true or false. For instance if, when you tell me you were at Mass on Sunday, and I would not believe what you say, you would bring some one who saw you there to tell me so. He would be a witness. A witness is, then, one who testifies to what he has seen or what he knows for certain. He who takes an oath, calls upon God as witness that he is telling the truth.

Any expression that implies calling upon God as witness to the truth of what we say, is an oath. The oath is an affirmative oath when we call God to witness that we are telling the truth; it is promissory, when we call God to witness a promise we make. It is official, when made by one, v. g., the President, who enters upon an office. Oaths made in courts of law are usually solemn, made standing, head uncovered, hand raised, etc. A just oath is a profession of faith in God as the infallible Truth.

205. When do we sin by swearing?

We sin by swearing

1) when we swear falsely,

2) when we swear without necessity,

3) when we swear to do evil.

To swear in doubt is as sinful as to swear falsely. — *Perjury* = a false oath. To break a just oath = not to keep an oath when possible.

1. A man swears falsely when he swears that something is true, although he knows or believes it to be false. He who is in doubt whether something is true, and swears that it is true, is as guilty as he who swears falsely.

2. It is sinful to swear without necessity, for trivial reasons. To call God to witness is something important; something holy; it requires something of importance to justify this. Children have neither the right nor the occasion to swear.

3. He who swears to do something bad, commits a great sin also. He has no right to do anything bad, much less to call upon God to witness that he will do it. Such an oath is sinful, and it is also sinful to keep it.

A false oath is called perjury, and is a grievous

sin. He commits perjury who swears to something false, or who will not keep his oath to do something good and lawful, if he can possibly or justly do so.

206. Is it a grievous sin to swear falsely?

To swear falsely is a very grievous sin against God and man.

"Thus saith the Lord of hosts: it (the curse) shall come to the house of him that sweareth falsely by My name: and it shall remain in the midst of his house, and shall consume it, with the timbers and the stones thereof" (Zach. 5, 4).

Frequently followed by temporal punishments!

He who swears falsely insults and mocks God, for he tells a lie and calls upon God, who is Truth itself, to help him to lie and deceive. He sins against his fellowmen, for he deceives them, and often causes them much injury. Do not swear falsely, not even to help your friends or your own self out of trouble, for a false oath is a great crime and brings down the curse of God on the perjurer.

207. What means: to make a vow?

To make a vow means: to voluntarily promise to God to do some particular good work.

Resolution—Promise—Vow.

A boy desires to be holy like St. Aloysius; this is merely a wish. Another says: "I will try to become holy like St. Aloysius." This is a resolution. A third boy says to another: "I will say a prayer for you every day this week." This is a promise. A fourth boy promises to God to hear Mass every day for a month. That is a vow. A boy is very sick; his mother promises to God a donation to a church, or to the orphans, or to the poor, if her boy is cured. That is a conditional vow, and is to be fulfilled, only if the boy is cured.

208. When do we sin against a vow?

We sin against a vow when through our own fault we do not keep what we have promised to God.

"If thou hast vowed anything to God, defer not to pay it. It is much better not to vow, than after a vow not to perform the things promised" (Eccles. 5, 3. 4). — Promise nothing of importance without first consulting the priest. Consult him also when you cannot keep a vow.

What we promise to our fellowmen we are bound to fulfil. How much more are we not bound to keep our promises to God! If what we have vowed is of importance, it is usually a mortal sin not to keep our vow. If through no fault of ours, we are not able to keep our vow, it is no sin; for instance, if sickness prevents us from going to Mass every day in Lent, as we had promised to God. If you have vowed something you cannot fulfil, or find it very difficult to fulfil, explain it to the priest, and he will tell you what to do. He may either dispense you from it, or change it into something easier.

Application. Avoid cursing; it is the language of the reprobates in hell. Keep sacred the names of God, of Jesus and of the saints. Often invoke these names with devotion, and the devil will flee from you.

Beware of cursing—the language of the devils and the damned. Pronounce the holy names of Jesus and Mary and of the saints devoutly, and bow at the name of Jesus, as the priest does at Mass. Often say: "Praised be Jesus and Mary." You can gain 25 days' indulgence by pronouncing devoutly the name of Jesus, or that of Mary.

Cursing.—In 1883 a servant girl who had charge of children, used to curse and teach the children to curse. God punished her. She soon suffered

fearful pains in her mouth which was full of disgusting sores; they caused her so much pain that she used to howl like a beast, and no one could stand the stench from her mouth.

Blasphemy.—In November, 1881, three young men were riding together in Union County, Kansas. They saw a cloud rising in the West. There had been a long drought all over the country. Seeing that cloud, John Freeman, the youngest of the three, began to blaspheme, saying: "God, who let us suffer so long, is not worth much." Hardly had he said this, when the lightning from the clouds played around the three riders and stunned John Freeman, leaving the others unhurt. Scarcely had Freeman regained consciousness than he continued to blaspheme. But another streak of lightning struck him dead from his horse, tearing away his boots and all the clothing from his legs, crushing the bones into pulp and making his whole corpse black. He was buried the next day, and when his grave had been covered up, another streak of lightning tore up the grave, doing no injury to the crowd around.

Perjury.—In Cologne, about fifty years ago, a witness, who had sworn falsely, fell down and broke his neck as he was coming down in court from the witness-stand.—In a certain lunatic asylum there was a perjurer, who, after his perjury had become crazy; he used constantly to raise up the three fingers of the right hand, as he had done in taking the oath, and would weep and yell and howl; thus he was an example of how God punishes perjury.—At his trial in Chicago a horse thief raised his hand to heaven, swearing that if he were guilty God should destroy his tongue and strike him dead on the spot. Hardly had he said this, when he trembled, tottered and fell dead on the spot.

Third Commandment of God.

Thou shalt keep holy the Lord's day.

209. Which is the Lord's day?

Sunday, the first day of the week, is the Lord's day.

On Sunday, God the Father began the creation, God the Son arose from the dead, and the Holy Ghost descended from Heaven. — The Jews observed the last day of the week, the Sabbath, and the apostles, commissioned by our Lord Jesus Christ, substituted for it the first day, the Sunday.

Because God is the Lord of all things, the first things belong to Him in a special manner. He required in the Old Law that the firstlings be offered to him. In like manner, we should offer to God the first day of each week, the first moments of each day. The Jews were ordered by God to keep holy the Sabbath day, or the seventh day of the week. Although the Bible does not say a single word about keeping the Sunday holy, we know that the apostles, by the power Jesus had conferred on them, changed the day to be kept holy from Saturday to Sunday, in memory of Christ's resurrection and of the descent of the Holy Ghost, and to distinguish the Christians from the Jews.

210. Which days must we keep holy like the Sunday?

We must keep the Holydays of obligation holy like the Sunday.

Mostly every day of the year the feast of some saint is celebrated by the priest in the divine office and at Mass. But in the United States there are only six feasts which we are bound to keep like Sundays. They are called Holydays of obligation.

211. Which are the Holydays of obligation in the United States?

The Holydays of obligation in the U. S. are:

1) The Immaculate Conception. December 8.
2) Christmas. December 25.
3) The Circumcision of our Lord. New Year's day.
4) The Ascension of our Lord. 40 days after Easter.
5) The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin. August 15.
6) All Saints' Day. November 1.

These are great feasts. Why do we begin with the feast of the Immaculate Conception, December 8? Because the Church year begins with the first Sunday of Advent, the Sunday nearest to December 1, and thus the Immaculate Conception comes first on the list.

212. How must we keep holy the Sundays and Holydays of obligation?

We must keep holy the Sundays and Holydays of obligation

1) by not doing any servile work,
2) by hearing Mass.

"Six days shalt thou labor, and shalt do all thy works. But on the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord, thy God: Thou shalt do no work on it (neither) thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy beast" (Exod. 20, 9. 10).

Servile works = such as are usually done by servants and laborers. Permitted in case of *necessity*. Dispensation.

1. There are two kinds of work, manual, or corporal, and mental. Manual, or corporal work is that done with the body, and mental, that done with the mind. On Sundays and Holydays the priest usually does the most work, but it is only mental, consisting of hearing confessions, saying or singing Mass, preaching, instructing, conferring the sacraments, etc. Studying, reading, writing, drawing, teaching are also mental work. Corporal work is that done chiefly with the body, most of this kind of work is called servile, because in the early ages of the Church, it was performed mostly by slaves, and now-a-days by hired help. Farming, mining, working at a trade, such as carpenter, mason, blacksmith, tailor, seamstress, laundry work and the like. This kind of work is forbidden on Sundays and Holydays, except in cases of necessity, for instance, in cases of accident—mending clothes just torn, fire, flood, etc. Necessary housework, such as cooking, sweeping, feeding cattle, etc., is permitted. To do servile work without necessity on such days is sinful; and if the work lasts two or three hours, or more, it is a mortal sin. (See above Exod. 20, 9, 10.) In case of doubt whether and when a certain kind of work is allowed, you should consult the priest. God gives us a strict command to keep one day in the week holy, because He wills that we devote it specially to His service and to the wants and salvation of our soul, and also because our body needs rest from labor. In the old French Revolution of 1789 the wicked rulers did away with the keeping of Sunday out of hatred to religion; and the result was that nearly all who took no day of rest, soon got sick and unable to work.

2. God commands us to keep the Lord's day holy and to abstain from servile work, and the

Church, commissioned by Him, commands us to hear Mass on Sundays and Holydays. It is a mortal sin wilfully to miss Mass on these days. Mass is the most holy divine worship, and we can give no greater honor to God than by devoutly hearing Mass. We are not commanded, but exhorted by the Church to hear the sermon, to assist at Vespers, to read good books, to receive the sacraments on Sundays and Holydays. Reasonable and innocent recreation is not forbidden on these days, provided we do not fail to hear Mass. Good Catholic families put on their best clothes on those days, say more prayers than usual, make a pious reading in common, and seek to recreate themselves also in common.

Application. If you desire to have God's blessing, observe the Sunday. Do no unnecessary work. If possible, enter no service where you cannot observe the Sunday as you should. Remember: All depends on God's blessing.

Be sure always to keep the Sunday holy; avoid later on going to live or work in places where you will not have the opportunity to hear Mass, where you will have to work all day Sunday as every other day. A man once told his son: "Here are seven dollars; I give you six of them, and will keep the seventh for myself." The boy said: "No, father, you shall not keep one for yourself; I want all the seven." What do you think of that boy? Was he not both ungrateful and wicked? In like manner, does that person act who will not keep Sunday holy; he refuses to God who has made him, one day in the week, and wants everything for himself! In the Old Law God ordered a man who had refused to keep the Sabbath holy, to be stoned to death. Those who work unnecessarily on Sundays never gain anything by it, for, said a holy priest,

"there are two ways of becoming very poor:—to keep unjust goods and to work on Sundays."

An English judge, named Holt, when a young man, frequented bad companions who used to spend Sundays in drunkenness and dissipation. Holt later on was converted and changed his life. One day he was about to pass sentence of death on a criminal, who had formerly been one of his boon companions in desecrating the Lord's day. Judge Holt asked him: "Friend, tell me what has become of all our other companions?" He replied: "All except us two have either undergone capital sentence, or have miserably died a violent death."

Stephen Girard, the infidel millionaire, one Saturday evening ordered all his employees to come back Sunday to finish unloading one of his ships. All agreed except one young man, who said to him: "Sir, I am willing to work for you any time, but not on Sundays, for it is against my conscience." "Go," said Girard to him, "get what is owing to you, for I now discharge you." The young man got his money and left. He tried for some time in vain to get work. About three weeks after a banker came to Girard, asking him if he knew of a reliable and honest young man to fill the position of cashier in his bank. "Oh, yes," said Girard, and he mentioned the name of the young man he had discharged. "But did you not lately discharge him from your employment?" "Yes, I did, because he would not work on Sundays. But a young man who will give up a good position like the one he had for the sake of his conscience, is most reliable and deserving of the best position you can give." The banker employed the young man, and gave him a large salary, and the young man prospered ever after.

Fourth Commandment of God.

Thou shalt honor thy father and thy mother.

213. Why must children honor their father and their mother?

Children must honor their father and their mother

1) because father and mother take the place of God in their regard.
2) because they are their greatest benefactors next to God.

1. Father and mother are the representatives of God with their children. It is as if God said to the parents, when He gives them a child: "This is My child; I give it to you to care for it, to educate it; you shall take My place with this child." It is a great thing for the parents to be God's representatives. What your parents do for you, is the same as if God did it for you; and what you do to your parents, is the same as if you did it to God. As representatives of God, the parents have the power and right to command their children. What they command, God commands. As representatives of God, the parents must love their children and care for them.

2. Think of all that your parents have done and are doing for you, since you were a little baby. What would have become of you without them? How your father has toiled so hard and so many years for you! How loving he was to you when he came home so tired from work! And your mother! How she nursed you, carried you, cared for you, spent many a sleepless night for you, taught you to pray! What you have, what you enjoy, is from your parents. How grateful you should be to them!

211. How do children honor their parents?

Children honor their parents

1) by loving them,
2) by obeying them,
3) by praying for them.

Sins against the fourth commandment: to despise parents, to speak ill of them, to treat them harshly and insolently, to wish them evil, to grieve them, to anger them, not to assist them in need or old age, not to obey them, not to mind their admonitions, to resist their corrections, not to pray for them.

1. Infants already love their mothers; they usually cry when they are taken away from her. Children must love father and mother, wish them well and do all to please them.

2. Jesus Christ Himself gave children the example of obedience to their parents; for He became a little child, and obeyed Mary and Joseph in all things, although He is God. Like Him, you must obey promptly, willingly and punctually.

3. Good children of their own accord pray for their parents. Since you cannot repay your parents for all they do for you, pray God every day to bless them.

Children should beware of despising their parents, of being ashamed of them, if they are poor, ill clothed, or not well educated. They should never make known the faults of their parents, or run them down. They should avoid all rudeness and harshness toward them, but treat them always with politeness and respect. It is a fearful thing for a child to wish evil to his parents or to curse them. Dutiful children are careful to please their parents and to do nothing that will cause them grief or anger. Children are bound to do all in their power to assist and comfort their parents in their poverty, their infirmities and their old age.

When the parents admonish their children, or point out their duties to them, the children should accept it all gratefully, and do all they can to carry out the wishes of their parents. They should willingly accept and submit to the corrections or punishments they received from their parents. And even when they are not in fault, though they may deny that they are guilty, they should, nevertheless, submit to their parents' correction and bear their parents no ill will for it; they should then consider how many a time they previously escaped well deserved punishment.—Finally those children who never pray for their parents, living or dead, are most ungrateful. They should never let a day pass without reciting special prayers for them. When their parents are dead, they should conscientiously carry out their parents' last will.

215. What may children expect who honor their parents?

Children who honor their parents, may expect the blessing of God in this life, and eternal happiness in the next.

"Honor thy father and thy mother, which is the first commandment with a promise: That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest be long-lived upon earth" (Eph. 6, 2, 3). — Sem, Isaac, Tobias.

God blesses in a special manner the children who honor their parents. They may expect to be preserved from misfortunes, to succeed in their undertakings and to live long upon earth. If, however, they happen to die young, it is because God thereby preserves them from great misfortunes, and wishes the sooner to reward them in heaven, for in heaven especially do dutiful children reap their reward.—God promised to Sem, the son of Noah, that the Redeemer would descend from him, because he had

shown due respect to his father. Isaac was blessed by God in a special manner, because of his submission to his father Abraham, when Abraham, obeying God, intended to offer him to God in sacrifice. Tobias, who was a model of a dutiful son, was so blessed by God that the Angel Raphael became his companion on a distant journey and helped him to acquire a fortune, and to find the means of restoring sight to his blind father.

216. What have children to fear who do not honor their parents?

Children who do not honor their parents, will be despised by all good people, cursed by God and punished by Him here and hereafter.

"Cursed be he that honoreth not his father and mother; and all the people shall say: Amen" (Deut. 27, 16). *"The eye that mocketh at his father, and that despiseth...his mother,...let the ravens...pick it out, and the young eagles eat it"* (Prov. 30, 17). — Cham, Absalom, the sons of Heli.

Just as God blesses dutiful children, so does He curse the undutiful. Good people despise them, and will have nothing to do with them. There are many examples of boys and girls who lost good situations because their employers did not want to keep in their employ undutiful boys and girls. God cursed Cham for having reviled his father; Absalom, for having revolted against his father, met with a terrible death, as did, likewise, the wicked sons of Heli.

217. Must we obey only our parents?

We must obey not only our parents, but also our superiors.

Priests—teachers—spiritual and temporal superiors.

Superiors are those who are placed over others, and these are called also inferiors; for instance:

parents are superiors with regard to their children, pastors with regard to their parishioners, teachers with regard to their pupils, and employers with regard to their employees. Superiors hold the place of God towards their inferiors. The Pope alone has no superior on earth. Spiritual superiors hold towards us the place of God in spiritual matters, in what concerns our salvation. Temporal superiors hold the place of God in temporal matters, in what pertains to order and peace, in protecting the good and punishing criminals. (Give examples of both kinds of superiors.)

218. Why must we obey our superiors?

We must obey our superiors, because they are representatives of God and have their power from Him.

"Obey your prelates and be subject to them" (Heb. 13, 17). *"Let every soul be subject to higher powers: for there is no power but from God. Wherefore be subject of necessity, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake"* (Rom. 13, 1, 5).

God alone has power of Himself over us; and no creature, no man has of himself power over us; all who have power over us have received it from God, and represent God in our regard in those things in which God has placed them over us. Our Lord said to Pilate who boasted that he had the power to crucify Him and the power to set him free: "Thou shouldst not have any power over Me, if it were not given thee from above." We are bound in conscience, that is, under pain of sin, to obey all our superiors.

219. When are parents and superiors not to be obeyed?

Parents and superiors are not to be obeyed when they command anything sinful.

"We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5, 29).

God, when He places our parents and superiors over us, does not give them the power, the right to command us anything that is forbidden by His commandments, and we are not allowed to obey them when they command such things. (Give examples of the three young men cast into the fiery furnace by Nabuchodonosor; of the seven Machabee young men cruelly put to death by Antiochus, of the Sanhedrim forbidding the apostles to preach Jesus Christ, of the martyrs, of St. Alphonsus and others following their vocation contrary to the will of their parents.) If, as bad parents sometimes do, your parents were to command you to lie, steal, etc., you must not obey them, and should rather suffer punishment than commit sin.

220. Whom especially should we, as Christians, honor and obey?

As Christians, we should especially honor and obey the Pope, the Bishop and our Pastors.

"With all thy soul fear the Lord, and reverence His priests" (Eccli. 7, 31). *"He that heareth you, heareth Me: and he that despiseth you, despiseth Me"* (Luke 10, 16).

The Pope is the Vicar of Christ and, therefore, has the power to govern all Christians; he has supreme power on earth in spiritual things, and is therefore called "Holy Father." All Christians must honor and obey him. The bishop has the power to govern all Christians in his diocese, and the pastor, in his parish. We must then honor and obey our bishop and our pastor. (See texts given above.)

Application. Obey all those who have the right to command you — thus you will obey God, who has given them this right. Have nothing to do with those who try to make you disobey and rebel against lawful authority. — Pray especially for your spiritual superiors.

Imitate the Child Jesus who obeyed all those that had authority over Him. If you have been disobedient until now, mend your ways and obey your superiors as you would obey God Himself. Avoid carefully all who are disobedient, all who try to make you disobey your parents and teachers. Pray much for all your superiors, but especially for those whose duty it is to help you to gain heaven.

When Benedict XI. became Pope, his poor mother came to Rome to congratulate him. Against her will they dressed her up in rich clothes and thus presented her to him. But the Pope said: "That finely dressed lady is not my mother, for my mother is a poor washerwoman." His mother went away to put on her own poor dress, and when she returned, the Pope went to meet her and embraced her, saying: "That is my dear, good mother, my greatest benefactress in this world." You see, he was not ashamed of his poor mother.

An old man had turned over his business and all his property to his son, who promised to care for him and make him comfortable in his old age. But the son did not keep his promise, and even drove his father out of the house. His father said to him: "My son, you drive me out of my own house, and you shall probably soon have to quit this comfortable house for a much smaller one." In fact, a few weeks later, the son died and was taken out of the house in a narrow coffin to the graveyard.

One day a young man had a hot dispute with his father, and grew so angry that he caught hold of his father by the hair and dragged him down the staircase to throw him out of the door. His father uttered no complaint and said nothing until his son had pulled him to the threshhold of the door; then he exclaimed: "Stop, my son! This is enough; I am sufficiently punished, for, when I was

young like you I dragged my father by the hair to this place, but no further." The son let go, horrified at his own crime and at what he heard.

Fifth Commandment of God.

Thou shalt not kill.

221. Who is the Lord and owner of our life?

God alone is the Lord and owner of our life.

It is God who gives us our life, and He alone is entitled to take it away from us. No man has the right to take away his own life or that of another.

222. When do we sin against our own life?

We sin against our own life

1) when we take our life,
2) when we endanger our life,
3) when we injure our health without necessity.

Suicide is a fearful crime. A self-murderer cannot be buried by the church, nor in consecrated ground. Infidelity and a wicked life lead to suicide.

Playing with revolvers; chewing and smoking when young, especially cigarettes; intemperance in eating, in the use of intoxicating drinks.

1. Suicide is a crime against God, the Master of life and death, for it robs Him of His power. It is a crime against one's self, for the suicide casts himself into hell, and is therefore, to be buried without ceremony, without the rites and prayers of the Church, and not in consecrated ground. What a trouble and disgrace he is to his family, etc. If he who commits suicide is insane or crazy, he may be buried like a Catholic, because he was not responsible for his act.

He who commits suicide, cannot be a good Christian and must have lost his faith, otherwise he would not directly wish to go to hell forever. People commit suicide, because they are moral cowards, unable to bear suffering or adversity, or have ruined themselves physically, etc., by an impure or dissipated life.

2. Those boys who catch behind cars, go a-swimming in deep places, or swift streams, go skating on thin ice; those girls who jump the rope hundreds of times consecutively, who dance excessively; children using or playing with firearms; all these expose their life unnecessarily.

3. Health is better than wealth. Many a millionaire would give millions for good health; but in vain. Those young boys injure their health who use tobacco, especially cigarettes; their heart becomes weak and subject to disease. Excess in eating, especially dainties, sweetmeats, is injurious, and brings on later many diseases that shorten life, or make people feel wretched. Worse still is the use of intoxicating drinks and opiates. These lead to drunkenness, which degrades man below the brute and is the source of poverty, quarrels, murders and of almost every crime.

223. When do we sin against the life of our neighbor?

We sin against the life of our neighbor

1) when we take his life,
2) when we shorten his life,
3) when we strike or wound him.

Murder. — Harsh treatment, annoyance, unwholesome or insufficient food. Adulterated, and therefore injurious articles of food.

To destroy human life is lawful only: 1) for the civil authority in the execution of criminals, 2) in war, 3) in self-defence.

1. He is guilty of murder who wilfully kills his neighbor. It is not murder, if not done purposely or intentionally; for instance, a man merely intends to strike another, but kills him by his blow. Murder is a terrible crime against God, and against the person murdered, especially if this person was in mortal sin when murdered, for the murderer then sends him to hell! Often the murderer brings misery on the family of his victim. Murder cries to heaven for vengeance, as God said to Cain, the first murderer, after he had murdered his brother Abel. Cain had no more rest, no more peace after his crime, because of his remorse; this is also usually the case with murderers.—How often are persons killed unintentionally, for instance, playing with firearms and shooting in fun; throwing stones and striking someone on the temple; not minding little children, who, left to themselves, fall and die from the effects of the fall; also, fast, reckless driving.

God has delegated to the civil government the power to put to death great criminals. Also, in a just war soldiers are allowed to shoot in battle, etc., at the enemy.—We are allowed to defend our life, and when we are unjustly attacked, even to kill the aggressor, if we cannot save our life any other way. The same may be said with regard to defending one's chastity. Duels are forbidden, because they are very criminal, and those who engage in them as principals or witnesses are excommunicated. (Explain this.)

2. We injure the health and shorten the life of others by harsh treatment, for instance, by making them work too hard or too long; also, by not giving them proper and sufficient food, by making them worry and grieve; this is often the case with undutiful children grieving their parents by their

evil conduct. Adulterated food or drinks are injurious to health, and those who adulterate or sell them sin against the health and life of their neighbor.

3. Blows, and especially wounds, are injurious to our neighbor and forbidden by the fifth commandment. Parents and teachers, however, are allowed to inflict reasonable punishment on the children or pupils that misbehave.

224. When do we injure our neighbor's soul?

We injure our neighbor's soul when we give scandal.

If it is a fearful sin to take away the life of the body, it is a far worse crime to destroy the life of the soul of our neighbor. He who by word, look, gesture or act, leads his neighbor into grievous sin, gives scandal, and robs the soul of his neighbor of sanctifying grace—that is, of the life of his soul, spiritually murders a soul, that cost the blood of Jesus.

225. When do we give scandal?

We give scandal

1) when we use impious, or filthy language,
2) when we do evil in the presence of others,
3) when we tempt others to do evil.

"He that shall scandalize one of these little ones that believe in Me, it were better for him that a millstone should be hanged about his neck, and that he should be drowned in the depth of the sea. Woe to that man by whom the scandal cometh" (Matt. 18, 6, 7).

He who gives scandal assists the devil in destroying souls. *"He* (the devil) *was a murderer from the beginning."* (John 8, 4). He destroys the souls for whom our Lord shed His Precious Blood and is guilty of all those sins which result from the scandal.

1. Those give scandal who scoff at religion or speak against faith; those who curse, especially before the young; those who talk about what is nasty and impure. They commit as many sins as they scandalize persons that hear them.

2. Those give scandal who commit sin before others, for instance, eat meat on a Friday, work on a Sunday, misbehave in church, give bad example.

3. There are some who are as bad as the devil. The devil led our first parents into sin, and tempts men to sin. To tempt others to sin, for instance, to steal, to stay away from Mass, to tell lies, to do something impure, is doing the work of the devil, is acting as the devil's agent. (See text above—Matt. 18.) If the devil would come to tempt you, you would not listen to him, or would drive him away. Hence the devil, to lead you to sin, sends a bad companion as his agent, and you are more apt to yield to the temptation. A bad young man once led his companion into a sin of impurity. Hardly had the sin been committed when his companion dropped down dead. The young man then cried out. "Woe to me; I have precipitated a soul into hell!" Full of remorse he went to a most strict convent to do penance, and there he would say to the religious: "Oh, help me, pray for me, for I have cast a soul into hell!"—He who gives scandal robs our Lord of the souls which He purchased with His own blood! These souls belong to Him, and the scandal-giver takes them away from Him and gives them to the devil.—He who gives scandal is responsible for all the sins resulting from his scandal. It often happens that those who are seduced by him, acquire the habit of sin and commit it for years and years, and also lead others astray, so

that the evil effects of his scandal may continue to the end of the world and cause the damnation of thousands of souls. Just like a person that has a contagious disease may occasion an epidemic that will cause the death of thousands and thousands of persons. Keep away from all bad companions; they are the agents of the devil, seeking to murder your soul. Beware of giving bad example, for you will then be the devil's agent and lead souls to sin and perdition.

He who has killed or injured someone, is bound to repair the damage; for instance, to support the family of the one he killed—to pay the doctor's bills, etc., of the person he injured. He who has given scandal must try to repair it, by giving good example, by trying to bring back to duty those he scandalized, by praying for them.

226. When do we sin in thought against the fifth commandment?

We sin in thought against the fifth commandment

1) when we hate our neighbor,
2) when we wish him death or any evil of the body.

"Whoever hateth his brother is a murderer" (I. John 3, 15).

1. Hatred is the opposite of love. He who hates his neighbor is mad with him, is sorry if he prospers, and glad if he meets with misfortune, and would wish to do him harm. Sometimes a person's hatred goes so far as to become deadly, that is, as to make him ready or willing to kill the one he hates; and thus he becomes a murderer in his heart. (Quote text above—1 John 3, 15.)

2. He who hates his neighbor wishes evil to

him, and sometimes curses him. The greater the evil wished, the greater the sin.

Application. Life and health are great blessings. We should preserve them as long as God wills it, that we may use them for His honor. He who takes his own life or that of his neighbor, robs God of that which belongs to Him alone. More precious than the life of the body is the supernatural life of the soul, i. e. sanctifying grace.

Sixth and ninth Commandments of God.

Thou shalt not commit sins of impurity.—Thou shalt not take pleasure in impure thoughts or desires.

227. Which is the most beautiful virtue?

The most beautiful virtue is chastity.

"O how beautiful is the chaste generation with glory; for the memory thereof is immortal, because it is known both with God and men" (Wis. 4, 1).

Chastity = innocence = purity = modesty = decency.

(In explaining or speaking of matters forbidden by the sixth and ninth commandments, the catechist cannot be too prudent, nor too carefully prepared. He ought to abstain from asking the children questions not contained in the catechism, lest he overstep the bounds of discretion and modesty. He should be most serious and reserved in his remarks, and strive to inspire horror for vice, without saying anything that might teach it to the innocent, or that might tend to excite curiosity or passion in the young. To introduce a subject so dangerous, yet so necessary, it is highly useful to dwell first on the excellence of chastity).

Impurity is a most shameful sin. Holy purity, or chastity, is the most beautiful of virtues; its memory never fades, and both God and men honor it, as the Holy Ghost says, chastity makes us like the angels in heaven. St. Thomas is called the angelic doctor, not only for his wonderful learning, but also for his wonderful chastity. St. Aloysius is called angelic, because he was pure like an angel. God loves the chaste; He chose as His

Mother a virgin, virginal souls for His foster-father, for His precursor, for His beloved disciple. He loves little children for their chastity and innocence. In heaven the virgins form the bodyguard of our Lord follow Him everywhere and sing a canticle that no other saints can sing. The more pure a soul is, the more it is beautiful and bright before God and the angels. Chastity even beautifies and ennobles the body. Its emblem is the spotless lily. The pure deserve to see God.—We should rather die than sin against chastity.

228. How do we sin against chastity?

We sin against chastity

1) by impure thoughts,
2) by impure desires,
3) by impure words,
4) by impure looks,
5) by impure actions.

As chastity is the most beautiful virtue, so impurity is the most ugly and shameful vice, so much so that if it were not necessary, if God did not will it, I would not even speak to you about it. But I must instruct you, so that you may never commit such a sin. When our first parents were created, they were pure and clothed with a garment of light; after their sin they lost that beautiful garment and were naked. God then at once clothed them in skins of animals, for God wants our body to be clothed: what is clothed must remain clothed, for God so wills it. Those who with pleasure think as naked of what should be covered, or look at it, or touch it without necessity, are impure. They sin against their body, which is sanctified by baptism, and has become a temple of the Holy Ghost, and is destined at the resurrection to be glorious

and forever glorified. The sin of impurity is so hideous that it should not even be named, nor spoken of without necessity. The very word is disagreeable, hence such sins are usually called—sins against the sixth commandment.

1. To think wilfully and with pleasure on impure things is a mortal sin. It is no sin to have such thoughts if we drive them away as soon as we are conscious of them. When we perceive such thoughts in our mind, we should at once think that God sees us, and pray, saying: "Jesus, Mary, help me! Jesus, Mary, assist me!" And then try to get rid of those thoughts and think of other things.

2. He who desires, wishes for impure things, commits a greater sin than if he wilfully took pleasure in bad thoughts. The desire is as bad as the deed, and if we have sinned by desire, we are bound to confess what evil we have desired.

3. Obscene language is a mortal sin for those who use it and for those who wilfully listen to it. Such language shows that the heart is corrupt. He who uses it commits as many sins as there are persons listening to him; he is guilty of scandal.

4. To gaze wilfully and with pleasure at impure objects—whether persons, pictures or things, is also a grievous sin. Avoid being uncovered; be modest in dressing and undressing, and if you happen to see anything improper, turn away at once and do not give it another look. Destroy all bad pictures and bad books.

5. Never touch on yourself or others what should be always covered, and never permit others to touch you; if others attempt to touch you, defend yourself or run away, or cry out for help, for all such touches without (great) necessity are very sinful, and lead to fearful sins.

229. Why must we detest impurity and most carefully guard against it?

We must detest impurity and most carefully guard against it

1) because no sin is more shameful,
2) because no other is so severely punished by God.

"The . . . unchaste . . . have their portion in the pool burning with fire and brimstone" (Apoc. 21, 8).

The deluge, Sodom and Gomorrha.

When we are in doubt whether something is a sin against purity, we must carefully avoid it, until we can ask our confessor.

1. Impurity is as shameful before God and the angels as chastity is beautiful and honorable before God and the angels. It is also shameful before men. When people say that a certain person is disgraced, they usually mean that that person has committed sins of impurity. Hence the impure out of shame, usually commit those sins in secret, and some even conceal them in confession and commit sacrilege. The impure may try to hide themselves from men, but they cannot hide themselves from God, for He sees all their deeds and even their very thoughts and desires.

2. Impurity is often followed by many other sins—disobedience, scandal, sacrilege, unbelief. It is often the cause of disease—of insanity—of consumption! How many boys and girls die young, because they ruin their health by such sins; there is often no cure for such sinners. The hospitals and insane asylums are full of the victims of the vice of impurity; and a great many die in it, die while committing it, and are lost forever! And in hell they are buried as in a fearful pool of fire and brimstone (Apoc. 21, 8). You should rather suffer every pain, even death itself, than commit such

sins. The frightful deluge, which drowned all mankind and all animals, except such as were saved in the Ark, was a punishment for sins of impurity! The beautiful cities of Sodom and Gomorrha, with all their inhabitants, were consumed by fire from heaven because of sins of impurity.

230. What leads most frequently to impurity?

Bad company most frequently leads to impurity.

Pestilence and small-pox are contagious. Wicked persons, obscene books, scandalous pictures, indecent plays, sinful dances, idleness.

Impurity = lust = voluptuousness.

1. Most of the impure learned the sin of impurity from evil companions. Bad company is catching, like a contagious disease. Flee at once from companions who say or do anything impure, and especially if they try to tempt you to commit such sins, and never more go with them.

2. Never read, look at, or handle bad books, such as dime novels, and the like. In fact, children should never read books without the sanction of their parents, or teachers, or of the priest, if they doubt whether the book is fit to be read.—Never look at impure or unbecoming pictures, whether in the streets, in books or elsewhere. *If in your power,* destroy all such books and pictures.

3. Boys should not play with girls—unless with their own sisters; nor girls with boys who are not their brothers. Boys and girls should never play kissing games, for that is not becoming and is also dangerous to purity.

4. Unbecoming dances are very sinful; dancing is usually dangerous to purity. Remember this when you get older.

5. If you wish to remain pure, you must keep

away from unbecoming plays, from cheap places of public amusements, such as dime museums and the like.

6. Above all, you must flee idleness. People that have nothing to do soon become corrupt, just like water which does not flow soon gets rotten and stinking. Be always busy. I prefer seeing children playing all the time, and even noisily, than to see them idle.—The impure emit a fearful stench before God; St. Philip Neri could always tell who were guilty of impurity, by the stench that came from them.

231. What should we do to preserve chastity?

To preserve chastity we should

1) shun whatever leads to impurity,

2) pray fervently for the virtue of purity.

Honor the Blessed Virgin. Often receive the sacraments.

1. To preserve chastity we must flee all the dangers to purity mentioned in 230.

2. We are very weak and cannot remain pure, unless God helps us and gives us strength to overcome temptation. Chastity, like the lily, cannot thrive without heavenly light and dew (grace of God). To obtain grace, we must pray daily for it. To preserve chastity, we should have a great devotion to Mary, the purest of virgins. Let us invoke her in temptation, as I have said before, and she will help us to remain pure. St. Alphonsus advises us to recite every morning and evening three Hail Marys, in honor of the purity of Mary, to obtain holy purity. Consecrate yourself to the Blessed Virgin every day, and ask her to keep you from all danger of impurity. Pray also to your guardian angel. Pray also to the three saints, represented with a lily, on account of their great purity—

St. Joseph, St. Anthony of Padua and St. Aloysius. —A powerful means to keep from impurity is frequent confession and holy Communion. Confession purifies the soul and puts you on your guard against danger; and holy Communion, the Bread of angels, the Bread of the strong, will make you strong against temptation and tend to render you pure like the angels. (Never defer receiving the sacraments beyond a month.)

Application. Preserve your innocence. It makes you like unto angels and leads you to Heaven. Often think of the words of our Divine Savior: *"Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God."*

When tempted very much, say: "If I consent, I'll commit a mortal sin; and if I were then to die immediately after, as so many others have died, I should be lost forever in hell!" When tempted, you should also say with Joseph in Egypt: "How can I do this wicked thing, and sin against my God?" (Gen. 39, 9.) (It would be well to relate briefly the life of St. Aloysius, of St. Stanislaus, or of other youthful saints.)

Seventh and tenth Commandments of God.

Thou shalt not steal. — Thou shalt not unjustly desire thy neighbor's goods.

232. What are those things called which belong to a person in particular?

Those things which belong to a person in particular are called his property.

God is the Lord and owner of all temporal goods. He has given the use of them to man, and demands an account of them. God wishes that we should strive to acquire property. Every man must labor. Some remain poor notwithstanding all labor, others become rich. Such is the will of God. The poor should be contented for God's sake—the rich should help the poor: both will thereby acquire greater merits in Heaven.

All things belong to God, because He made them; He is the sovereign Lord of all things. He can do with them whatsoever He wishes. He, like a good father, has given the things of this world to men, and these belong to those to whom He gave them, just like when your father gives you something, that thing is yours; and yet you cannot do with it just what you please; for instance, your father gives you a hat; the hat is yours, and yet you are not allowed to tear it, to throw it away, to destroy it. In like manner, although men own the things God has given them, they may not always do what they please with them, but they are bound to make a good use of them. Hence, just as your father gives you a hat for your use, so God gives things to men for their use, or rather He lends things to men only for a time, for their use, and He will demand of them an account of the use which they have made of them. Just as you have a right to the hat your father gives you, and no one may take it from you, so also God intends that each one should possess as his, as his property, what He gives him, and that no one should have the right to take it away from him. Hence God wishes that men should possess things, and have a right to what they possess, which others must respect. Were not this the case, there would be nothing but trouble and confusion, and the strong could deprive the weak of everything. But how does God wish men to get possession of things? By work. "Thou shalt earn thy bread," said God to Adam after his sin, "in the sweat of thy brow." God wills that we work six days, and rest on the seventh. What we gain or acquire by our work is our own, our property, which we may use or dispose of as we wish, so long as we do not go against the will of God. Some

work hard and always remain very poor; others work little and get very rich. Why does God allow this? God wishes some to be always poor, so that by their patience and resignation they may get rich in heaven. God knows what is best for them. If those persons were to get rich, they would probably make a bad use of their wealth and be lost forever. What harm is there if, by being poor for a few years on earth, we become rich forever in heaven? God wills that others get very rich, so that they may be able to do a great deal of good to the poor, by giving them work and helping them in their wants, and thus save their own souls. Our Lord says: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5, 3); and "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." (Matt. 5, 7.)

233. How do we injure our neighbor in his property?

We injure our neighbor in his property

1) by stealing,
2) by cheating,
3) by not restoring things found to the owner,
4) by not paying our debts,
5) by damaging anything that belongs to him.

Theft, robbery, cheating, receiving or buying stolen goods, helping to steal, usury.

1. Stealing is taking what does not belong to us against the will or consent of the owner. A thief steals usually in secret; a robber steals by force; a burglar breaks into a house to steal.

2. Cheating takes place when in buying or selling we deceive others, for instance, selling watered milk, bad goods, giving poor measure or weight,

doing poor work, using poor material in work, passing counterfeit money, or forging checks or orders for goods, gambling, begging or collecting under false pretense, and the like.

3. We are not allowed to keep the lost things that we find; we should try to find out the owner, especially if what we find is valuable. If you cannot discover the owner, especially if you take much trouble to do so, you may keep what you found; it would be well if you would give it to the poor, or for some religious or charitable purpose.—Not to return things borrowed is almost as bad as not to give things found to the owner.

4. We must pay our debts. If, when we are able, we do not pay what we owe, we are no better than a thief. We should try to avoid getting into debt. It is a very great sin to contract debts without intending to pay them.

5. To spoil, damage or destroy what belongs to another is sinful. Boys, especially, seem to take delight in injuring the property of their neighbor. That is a sin against the seventh commandment.

Usury is also forbidden. Usury is the charging of an exorbitant rate of interest for loans made especially to poor people, to persons in distress. Also, it is very sinful to buy up a certain thing much needed, and to raise the price of it so as to make plenty of money. In like manner, to take advantage of hard times, or of one's poverty, to pay too low wages for work. All these things are grievous sins against justice.

To receive, to help to conceal, to buy stolen goods, to help, in any manner, others to steal, are all sins against the seventh commandment. If the loss suffered by our neighbor through our sins against the seventh commandment is great, the sins committed are mortal; if it is only trifling, the sins are only venial. Yet if we injure our neighbor only

a little at a time, but do so daily or very frequently, the amount soon becomes large, and thus our sin also becomes grievous.

234. What must we do when we have injured our neighbor in his property?

When we have injured our neighbor in his property, we must repair the injury done.

We must restore ill-gotten goods or their value. As far, and as soon as we are able. To the owner or his heirs. If several have stolen, *one* must restore all, if the others will not do so.

He who is not willing to make restitution, remains in sin and cannot be forgiven.

God will not forgive our sin if we do not fully repair the injury we have done to our neighbor. The priest cannot give absolution to those who, when able, refuse to do this. We must repair the whole injury; for instance, restore not only the sum stolen, but also the interest, and make good any other loss caused, v. g., he who injured his neighbor's horse, and his neighbor in consequence could not go to work for some time till he got another horse, the wages he would have made during that time must be paid in addition to the cost of the horse. Restitution must be made the best way we can, v. g., by working for the injured person without charging for our work. We must restore as soon as we can; if not able to do it all at once, we should do it a little at a time, till all is restored. If we cannot possibly do it on account of our poverty, we should have the good will to do it later, if we are able. Only then can the confessor forgive our sins against the seventh commandment.

We must restore to the person or persons we have injured, or if dead, to his or their heirs. If we do not know the owner, or cannot find out his whereabouts, we must give the amount to the poor, or to the church, or to some charitable institution.

If several persons together have wronged their neighbor in his property, they must each restore his share of the injury done; but each one is bound to restore the whole amount, in case the others do not or are unwilling to do so, for the theft would not have been made if he had not helped.

If we happen to have something in our possession that was stolen, we must give it back to the owner, although we may have obtained it without knowing it was a stolen object. We should be careful from whom we buy things, especially such as are offered very cheap by unknown parties.

How must we restore? We need not go ourselves and give back to the owner what belongs to him, and tell him that we have wronged him. We should try to find out some means of restoring without betraying ourselves. When we are in doubt as to how to act in such a case, let us ask our confessor to advise us what to do, and even to help us to do it, or to do it for us.

Restitution is usually very difficult. Many are damned because they will not make restitution, although they are able to do so. Let us not forget that, so long as restitution is not made, when possible, there is no forgiveness of the sin, and if the sin is grievous, there is no salvation without restitution. Hence, when the injury done to our neighbor is great, and we are able to repair it, we must choose between restitution and the endless fire of hell. (Anecdote of the cow of St. Medardus that was stolen; the bell of the cow would not stop ringing: "Bring me back, bring me back.")

235. When do we unjustly desire our neighbor's goods?

We unjustly desire our neighbor's goods when we wish to possess them in an unlawful manner.

The tenth commandment forbids not every wish for things possessed by others, but only the wish to get them in an unjust manner. Children see someone with a fine dress, with some fine book, picture or plaything, or the like, and say: "I wish I had that." By this they only mean they wish they had something like it, but do not wish or intend to steal it. What is forbidden by the tenth commandment is the wish or intention to steal or take away, or to get by cheating, what belongs to another. The intention to steal or to wrong our neighbor is, before God, a sin and as bad as the deed itself.

Application. Be contented with what you have, and strive honestly to acquire more. Give to every one his own. Never take what does not belong to you, be it ever so trifling. He who steals little things will end by stealing greater things.

Attach not your heart to earthly goods. — Beware of avarice and covetousness.

Let us not envy those who have more than we; wealth does not make a man happier or more contented; on the contrary; the more we have, the greater our cares, our worry, and the less contented we are, and the more we want. God knows what it best for us, and gives us only what we need to get the more easily to heaven; if we had more, we should perhaps go entirely astray; whilst, if we are content with what God gives us, we can more easily be saved. "What doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his soul?" (Matt. 16, 26.) We may try to increase our possessions, but let us do so honestly, giving to everyone what belongs to him, and never taking even the smallest trifle that does not belong to us. This is a most important point. Great thieves and swindlers began by taking little things. Let us

not attach our heart to earthly goods, to money; let us not be misers, but let us be charitable to the poor, and try to enrich ourselves in heaven by being good Christians.

Eighth Commandment of God.

Thou shalt not lie.

236. When do we sin against the eighth commandment?

We sin against the eighth commandment

1) when we tell a lie,

2) when we rob our neighbor of his good name.

237. What is meant by lying?

By lying is meant: saying what is not true with the intention of deceiving our neighbor.

Deceiving = leading into error.

"The devil . . . is a liar, and the father thereof" (John 8, 44). *"Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord"* (Prov. 12, 22).

Hypocrisy: pretending to be better than we really are. Judas kissing our Savior. Herod pretended that he wished to adore the Infant Jesus.

He who purposely tells an untruth, lies. Two things make up a lie—the telling of an untruth and the telling of it on purpose, in order to deceive. He who tells something untrue, but believes it to be true, does not tell a lie, for he does not intend to deceive. For instance, a pupil being asked by the teacher how much is twice six, answers thirteen, believing it the correct answer, he does not tell a lie, for he does not intend to deceive. (Give other examples.)

Some children tell lies to escape punishment, and some even tell lies to injure others, for instance, to see them punished. Every lie is sinful, for it

offends God, who is Truth itself. If the lie causes great harm it is even a mortal sin. Lying comes from the devil, who by lying induced Eve to eat the forbidden fruit, for he said: "If you eat of this fruit you shall not die, but shall become like God." God hates liars, for He is Truth and Holiness itself. (Ananias and Saphira.) Lying is hateful to men, for no one loves to be deceived. Men do not believe those who have deceived them, even when they tell the truth. (Anecdote of the shepherd crying for help against the wolf, and laughing at his dupes.) Hence, never tell a lie, not even to save the whole world.

Hypocrisy is making ourselves appear better than we are. For instance, there are several children in the church talking, laughing and cutting up; all at once they see the priest coming, and they kneel down and make out they were praying, in order to make him believe that they are pious children. Herod, who intended to put our Lord to death, tried to make the wise men believe he intended to go and adore Him. The Pharisees used to put on long faces and pray and give alms in public, and show how they hated bad people, in order to be looked upon as holy; and yet they were deceitful, dishonest and full of vices.

Fables and parables, plays and the like, though not true, are not lies, because, though not true, there is no intention to deceive. The same may be said of jokes and conundrums. Also when there is a good reason, the truth may be concealed, so as to lead others into error. For instance, St. Athanasius was once cruelly persecuted. To escape he went into a boat and fled; but seeing that his pursuers would soon overtake him, he turned back towards them, and when he got near, they asked him where was Athanasius; he replied: "He

is not far from here; if you hurry up you can easily catch him." They went on and he escaped. (Also St. Thomas of Canterbury, fleeing in the garb of a beggar.) We are never allowed to tell an untruth, a real lie; but we may give an evasive answer, which may lead others into error, whenever we have a good reason to conceal the truth, and we are not questioned by competent authority. We are not allowed to betray a natural or a professional secret (v. g., a priest, a lawyer, a physician); and when questioned, we may answer: "I do not know," meaning, "I do not know as an individual."

238. How do we rob our neighbor of his good name?

We rob our neighbor of his good name

1) by detraction,
2) by slander.

A boy who is obedient, studious, pious and kind to all, has a good name, and is honored and well thought of by all who know him, and has a right to be thus honored. Now, if some evil-intentioned boy says something bad about him with an appearance of truth, people begin to think evil of the good boy, and no longer honor or trust him; and thus he has been robbed of his good name by the boy who spread evil reports about him.

239. What is detraction?

Detraction is telling the hidden faults of others without necessity.

A fault is some evil thing that is committed; a hidden fault is a fault known to only a few persons, i. e., to one or two. Such a fault should not be published. He that knows another's hidden fault is guilty of detraction if he goes about making it known to others; he thus causes the one guilty

of the fault to lose his good name, for people get thereby a bad opinion of him.

1. We may and should make known even the hidden faults of others when we are questioned about them by those who have the right to know and the duty to correct; for instance, Joseph making known to Jacob, his father, the great fault of his brothers.

2. We may make known and speak of the faults of some one to warn others and keep them from harm, for instance, to warn and keep children from bad or dangerous company.

Detraction is sinful, and even a mortal sin, if it causes much injury. It is contrary to the love we owe our neighbor; it is a theft, for it robs our neighbor of his good name, his greatest natural good; it sometimes does great harm, v. g., causes one to lose his position, or prevents him from getting employment, or gets him into even serious trouble. Never entertain yourself with companions about the faults of others, not even as a pastime, nor as idle gossip. All this is sinful, uncharitable and very hateful. Avoid all tale-bearing, going from one to another, repeating what people say of one another, thus creating mischief and sometimes even fearful enmities.

Not only those who do these things sin, but also all who listen to them; the listeners are just as bad as those who backbite their neighbor, for backbiters would have no chance to backbite their neighbor if they had no listeners.

240. What is slander?

Slander is falsely accusing our neighbor of something bad.

Slander is a greater sin than detraction, for besides robbing the neighbor of his good name, it is

also a lie. The wife of Putiphar, accusing Joseph of tempting her, was guilty of slander, for the contrary of what she said was true. To greatly exaggerate another's fault is also slander. Some children are often guilty of slander. The devil was the first slanderer. God told our first parents that they should die if they ate of the forbidden fruit; but the devil told Eve: "You shall not die," thus accusing God of being a liar.

241. When do we sin in thought against our neighbor's good name?

We sin in thought against our neighbor's good name, when, without reason, we think evil of him.

False suspicion: to surmise evil of our neighbor without sufficient reason. *Rash judgment:* to believe evil of our neighbor without sufficient reason.

"*Judge not, and you shall not be judged*" (Luke 6, 37).

We should not merely not rob our neighbor of his good name by our words, we must not even rob him of his good name in our own mind by our thoughts. We should consider everybody as good until we have clear proofs of the contrary. There are two kinds of thoughts contrary to the eighth commandment.

False suspicion. For instance, we have lost some money or some other thing, and at once, without proof or sufficient reason, we suspect so and so to have taken it; a person remains a long time in the confessional, and we think that he must have had plenty of grievous sins to confess.—It is, however, no false suspicion to refuse to believe an habitual liar that tells the truth. Why?

Rash judgment. For instance, you heard a child crying, and without proof or reason, you judge it

is getting a whipping for being bad. Let us not judge others, and we shall not be judged.

Anecdote. A certain sick man had a dream a little before his death, in which he saw the devil showing him all his sins written on a large sheet of paper, and saying: "You have committed too many sins, God will not forgive you, and you shall go to hell." But the sick man replied: "No, I shall not be damned; for during my life I never suspected or judged any one, and I shall not be judged and condemned." Then his guardian angel took the sheet of paper out of the devil's hands and tore it up, saying: "Have confidence; you never judged others and you shall not be judged." The sick man awoke and sent for the priest, and received the last sacraments full of consolation and hope.

242. What is he obliged to do, who by slander has injured the character of his neighbor?

He who by slander has injured the character of his neighbor must retract the slander and repair the injury he has done him.

Retract = to take back.

The slanderer is a thief, and has stolen his neighbor's good name; he is, therefore, bound to make restitution to repair the harm he has done to his neighbor's good name by telling all who heard his slander, that what he said was not true. Very few slanderers are willing to pass as liars; hence many slanderers are damned.

Anecdote. A nobleman had falsely charged, in presence of several persons, a lady with disgraceful conduct. Feeling remorse about this, he went to a priest and asked him what he should do. The priest knew that the nobleman was so proud that would not retract his slander; he therefore said to him: "Sir, you are lost; you will go to hell."

The nobleman was terrified and could find no rest. Hence he went to a very holy and learned priest and told him what he had done, and also what the other priest had said to him, and added, "Now tell me what I must do; I am ready to fast, to give alms, to do severe penance." The priest replied: "You need not do this; all that is necessary is to tell those who heard it that you had slandered that lady." The nobleman got angry and said: "No; I will never do that! I cannot and I will not." "Then," said the priest, "the priest you first consulted told the truth, for you are lost and will surely go to hell."

And even if the slanderer retracts, he usually cannot repair the harm he has done..

Anecdote. In a certain town in Austria there was a very holy priest. Some wicked persons shamefully slandered him. The priest, on hearing of it, fell dangerously sick. This frightened the slanderers, and they came to beg his pardon on their knees, promising to retract all they had said falsely about him. He replied: "I have forgiven you from my heart and prayed for you; but you can never give me back my good name." But they would not believe him. He then told them to take his feather pillow, and after ascending the church steeple, to open it and scatter the feathers in all directions. They then came back and told him they had done as he told them. He said to them: "Now, go and collect all those feathers and put them back into the pillow." They replied: "That is impossible, for the wind has scattered them in all directions." "In like manner," he said, "you cannot give me my back my good name, for your slanders have been scattered far and wide in all directions, and so many people have heard and believed them that you cannot go to each one to re-

tract your slanders." He again forgave and blessed them, and died a few hours later.

As to those who have been guilty of detraction, they cannot retract what they said by saying that is was not true, for this would be a lie. They should try to speak well of the persons against whom they sinned by backbiting.

2. If our detraction or slander has caused harm, v. g., loss of a good situation, of good customers, or any other injury to our neighbor's goods, we must make the necessary restitution, just as if we had stolen from him.

Application. Be sincere. Never tell a lie nor be a hypocrite. Never speak uncharitably of your neighbor. A good name is better than riches. Never do to others what you would not wish done to yourself. Never listen with pleasure to detraction or slander. "He who speaks such things has the devil in his mouth; he who listens to them, has the devil in his ear." (St. Bernard.)

Be always truthful. Never feign. To save him from death, his friends tried to persuade Eleazar, a holy old Jew before Christ, to feign eating pork, which God had forbidden the Jews to eat. But he refused doing so, for he would rather die than even only appear to give bad example. Never say or listen to anything against the good name of your neighbor. A good name is more precious than riches and every other temporal good. (Insist on the quotation from St. Bernard.)

Commandments of the Church.

The Church has the right and power to make laws, to give commandments, to prescribe all that is necessary for our salvation. All who are baptized belong to the Church and are subject to her laws. He who obeys the Church, obeys Jesus Christ; he

who disobeys her, disobeys Jesus Christ and endangers his salvation. The Church has made many laws, but most of them regard the priests. There are six general laws or commandments of the Church that regard all the faithful.

243. Which are the chief commandments of the Church?

The chief commandments of the Church are

1) To hear Mass on Sundays and Holydays of obligation.
2) To fast and to abstain on the days appointed.
3) To confess at least once a year and to receive Holy Communion at Easter or within the time appointed.
4) Not to join forbidden societies.
5) To contribute to the support of the Church and our pastors.
6) Not to marry contrary to the laws of the Church.

These are the chief commandments of the Church. Besides there are many others; for instance, to fast from midnight before receiving holy Communion.

244. What does Christ say of him who will not keep the commandments of the Church?

Christ says: "If he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and publican" (Matt. 18, 17).

"He that heareth you, heareth Me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth Me; and he that despiseth Me, despiseth Him that hath sent Me" (Luke 10, 16).

"Whatsoever you shall bind upon earth, shall be bound also in Heaven: and whatsoever you shall loose upon earth, shall be loosed also in Heaven" (Matt. 18, 18).

Mind well that the question is not about who *does not keep* the commandments of the Church, but about who *will not keep* the commandments of the Church. Why? because those who cannot keep them, are not obliged to do so; for instance, the sick cannot go to Mass on Sunday, and, therefore, are not bound to do so, and commit no sin if they do not hear Mass. But those who can keep the commandments of the Church, and yet do not keep them, disobey not only the Church, but also Christ Himself, and commit sin; and if they disobey the Church in some important matter, they commit a mortal sin, deserving of the eternal torments of hell. (Quote texts given above.)

Hence be sure to keep faithfully the commandments of the Church all the days of your life. If you do not obey the Church, your mother on earth, you will have no share with your Father in heaven. St. Cyprian says: "He who will not have the Church as his mother, cannot have God as his Father." Only he who faithfully keeps the commandments of the Church is a practical Catholic and fit for heaven.

First Commandment of the Church

To hear Mass on Sundays and Holydays of obligation

245. Who is obliged to hear Mass on Sundays and Holydays of obligation?

Every one who has come to the use of reason is obliged to hear Mass on Sundays and Holydays of obligation.

Children who are seven years old.
The sick and all who have a good excuse are exempted.

Holy Mass is the most holy act of divine worship or service. Why? Because in it Jesus Christ offers Himself for us to His heavenly Father, and prays with us and for us. No matter what pious acts we may otherwise perform on Sundays and holydays, if we neglect to hear Mass, we do not keep them holy. (See Question 211 about holydays, etc.)

Who are bound to hear Mass on those days? All who have come to the use of reason, i. e., all who are seven years old and over. To hear Mass properly, we should be in the church, and not stand outside of the church, and we should pay attention to the priest, follow him and unite ourselves with him. We ought to use the devotions for Mass in our prayerbook. If we have none, we ought to say the beads or some other prayers, and follow the priest. You ought to be already in church before the priest begins the Mass, and not go out until it is all over. It would be well if we heard the parochial (high) Mass in our parish church, because it is offered up for all the members of the parish.

The sick and the convalescent and those who nurse the sick are excused from hearing Mass. Other excuses are very bad weather, especially for those in weak health, great distance, being in a place where there is no priest, or necessary work. But as to those who live very far from a church, or who have always to work on Sundays, etc., they are bound to try so to arrange matters as to be able to hear Mass at least monthly. As to those who allege they are too tired to hear Mass and need rest because they were at a party, at a dance, their excuse is not good. Why?

246. When do we sin against the first commandment of the Church?

We sin against the first commandment of the Church

1) when we do not hear Mass on days appointed,
2) when we hear only a part of a Mass,
3) when we hear Mass without devotion.

1. It is not a sin if we miss Mass without it being our fault; if through our fault, it is a mortal sin.

2. It is only a venial sin if we come only a little late, even through our own fault, or leave without sufficient reason after the holy Communion. If, however, through carelessness, we come after the beginning of the Offertory, or leave before the holy Communion, we do not hear Mass, but commit a mortal sin, unless we hear another Mass.

3. We must hear Mass with devotion, that is, be present in body and mind, and pay attention to and follow the priest, especially at the Offertory, Consecration and holy Cummunion. If we pay no attention to the Mass, talk, laugh, look around, etc., we do not hear Mass, and may even be guilty of mortal sin.

Application. Be conscientious in hearing Mass: by doing so you will obtain God's blessing for the entire week. If possible, hear a sermon on Sundays and Holydays. "*He that is of God, heareth the words of God*" (John 8, 47). Assist also at the divine service in the afternoon, at devotions, at instructions and at Benediction. By doing this, you will be a *good* Christian and set a good example.

(Impress these points strongly on the children, especially for the time after they shall have quit going to school.)

Second Commandment of the Church.

To fast and to abstain on the days appointed.

247. What is meant by fasting?

By fasting is meant: taking but one full meal a day.

At noon. Besides this we are permitted to take a little bread (2 ounces) in the morning, and a collation (about a fourth of a meal) in the evening. Liquids do not break the fast.

Every one who has completed the age of 21, is obliged to fast. Those exempted are: the sick or convalescent, those who do hard work, very poor people, those over 60 years old, and all who have a dispensation.

To fast is to do without food. When the Church prescribes fasting, she wishes us to do without food the whole day, except at one meal, when we may eat as much as we need. This rule of the Church was formerly strictly kept, and people on fast days used to do all day without food till the evening. But as nowadays people cannot stand it so long, those who are obliged to fast may take their full meal about noon, and may in the morning eat not more than two ounces of bread or crackers, and in the evening they may take a collation, or supper, of about eight ounces of food. Drinking does not break the fast, provided the liquids drunk are not nourishing, as milk and soups are. All over twenty-one of age and under sixty years are bound to fast on the days prescribed, except the sick and the sickly, the convalescent, those who do hard work, whether mental or manual, the very poor who sometimes have very little or very poor food to eat, and those who are dispensed on account of some great difficulty in fasting; but these latter ought to perform some other determinate good work instead.

248. What is meant by abstaining?

By abstaining is meant: eating no flesh-meat.

Every one who has completed the age of seven is obliged to abstain from flesh-meat. The use of meat-soup is not allowed.

Abstain = to keep from.

The flesh of animals that have warm blood is forbidden on days of abstinence, v. g., of oxen, calves, pork, mutton, fowls. Their flesh is called flesh-meat. The flesh of animals that have cold blood is allowed on days of abstinence, v. g., fish, oysters, crabs, frogs, lobsters, turtles, and the like. On days of abstinence, meat-soup and things cooked with meat are forbidden. Eggs, milk, butter, cheese, formerly forbidden, are allowed in the United States on days of abstinence, as well as food prepared with lard.—What is the difference between fasting and abstinence?

All persons over seven years of age are bound by the laws of abstinence, except the sick, those who, through poverty or other circumstances beyond their control, cannot get anything but meat, and those who, for good reasons, may have received a dispensation.

249. Which are days of fasting?

The days of fasting are:

1) all week-days of Lent,
2) the Ember days,
3) certain vigils.

The *forty days of Lent* from Ash-Wednesday to Easter Sunday.

The *Ember days* are the Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays after the third Sunday of Advent, after the first Sunday of Lent, after Whitsunday, or Pentecost, after the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross (September 14).

The *vigils* are the days before Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, Assumption and All Saints' Day.

1. Lent extends from Ash-Wednesday to Easter Sunday, forty-six days in all; but as the Sundays are not days of fasting and penance, there are only forty days of fasting and penance, to honor the forty days of our Lord's fast in the wilderness, and to prepare us by meditating on our Lord's sufferings and death, to receive the Easter Communion, and to rise to a new life of piety and holiness.

2. The reason of the fasting on the Ember days is because usually priests are then ordained, and the Church wishes us to obtain from God by prayer and penance good and holy priests.

3. In olden times on the eves of the greater feasts the Christians used to spend the day in fasting and prayer and watch, or keep vigil, during the whole night in prayer and singing psalms, to prepare worthily to celebrate the feast. And now all that the Church requires is fasting and abstinence on the eves or vigils of five feasts (above enumerated).

250. Which are the days of abstinence?

The days of abstinence are:

1) all days of fasting,

2) all Fridays.

By dispensation permission is generally given in the United States, to eat meat on all days of Lent except Wednesdays, Fridays and the Ember days. The only Friday, on which the use of flesh-meat is permitted, is the Friday on which Christmas happens to fall.—The use of fish and flesh-meat at the same meal is not allowed, not even on the Sundays of Lent.

In 1895 the Pope granted a privilege allowing meat at one meal to workingmen and their families on certain days of abstinence, in those places where the bishops would deem it necessary.—Moreover in later years the Pope has sometimes granted

dispensation from the abstinence on some Friday for good reasons.

1. Formerly all days of fasting were also days of abstinence; but at present flesh meat is allowed by dispensation on the fast days mentioned above.

2. Abstinence is prescribed on Fridays in memory of the death of our Lord, which took place on a Friday. Friday is then a day of sorrow and penance.

The commandment of fasting and abstinence is a very strict one, obliging under pain of mortal sin.

Application. Observe strictly the commandment of fasting and abstinence: by fasting you imitate the example of Christ and the saints, and do penance for your sins. Never eat meat on Friday, even when with Protestants: thus you profess your faith and gain honor before God and man.

Keep now the law of abstinence strictly, and when you are old enough, keep also the law of fasting, unless your work or poor health dispense you therefrom. In doing this, we imitate the example of Jesus Christ, who fasted forty days and forty nights, and of the saints who, besides keeping these laws of the Church, used to deny themselves on Fridays and at other times fruit and delicacies out of a spirit of penance. By keeping these laws of the Church we do penance for our sins, shorten our purgatory and gain merit for heaven, and besides we are enabled to pray better and to overcome temptations more easily. Let us obey the Church, and not listen to those who would tempt us to eat meat on days of abstinence. The first commandment God gave to our first parents was one of abstinence, forbidding them to eat of a certain fruit. The fruit was not bad in itself, but by eating it they sinned, because they disobeyed God. In like manner, meat is not bad in itself on days of

abstinence, but if we then eat it without necessity, we sin, because we disobey the Church and God Himself. Moreover, fasting and abstinence often conduce much to good health, as physicians acknowledge, for a great many diseases are caused principally by eating too much and too many meats. The ancient anchorites who used to live on bread and water, eating only once a day at most, used to live to extreme old age, sometimes to over 100 years.

Be sure never to eat meat on a Friday, not even if you live among Protestants and non-Catholics. If you are faithful in this, you profess your faith and obey the Church and God Himself, and prove yourself worthy of respect among respectable men by following your conscience. Do not care for the sneers of the wicked. Show your moral courage by despising their ridicule, which can do you no harm.

Anecdote.—When Johnny was twelve years old, his parents sent him to catechism to prepare for his first holy Communion. Until then Johnny had never said any prayers, never heard Mass, never abstained from meat on the prescribed days of abstinence, never made his confession, and this because his parents, though Catholics, had entirely given up the practice of their religion and totally neglected the religious instruction of their son. At catechism Johnny soon learnt his prayers and the obligation of hearing Mass and keeping the days of abstinence. He began to say his prayers morning and evening and to go to Mass on Sundays, and resolved never more to eat meat on the days of abstinence. Hence when Friday came and he was seated at table for dinner with his father and mother, he contented himself with eating dry bread, for he would not touch the

meat or the meat-soup. Seeing this, his father bade him take some. But he excused himself, saying he did not care to eat meat. "Are you sick?" asked his father. "No, father, I am not sick" "Well," said his father, "I want you to eat some meat and take this soup." "Father, I am willing to obey you in everything, but I cannot obey you in this." "Why?" inquired the father. "Because today is Friday, and meat is forbidden on Fridays." "Nonsense," said his father; "I command you to eat this piece of meat." "Father, I am ready to obey you in everything else, but I cannot eat meat today, for it would be a sin for me to do so." His father insisted and threatened to punish him, if he disobeyed. But Johnny remained firm; and his father rose and gave him a severe whipping, and then locked him up in a dark room, saying: "You shall remain here and have nothing to eat till I come back home this evening, and woe to you if you still persist in disobeying me." When his father had gone back to his work, his mother, who loved him and greatly pitied him, came to him and offered him something to eat, saying: "Johnny, I know you are hungry; here, eat this, there is no meat in this." "Mother," he replied, "I am hungry, it is true; but father said I should not have anything to eat till he would come back home. I must obey him in this, although I feel very hungry, for in this obedience is not sinful; but I cannot obey him, if he commands me to eat meat on Friday." When the father came home, the mother told him what she had done, and what Johnny had said. This touched his father's heart, and he took Johnny out of the dark room and treated him very kindly. From that day there was no more meat placed on the table on the days of abstinence, and his parents began going to hear Mass on Sundays, and when the day for Johnny's

first holy Communion had come, he had the happiness to see both his father and mother receiving holy Communion also, after they had neglected it for many years. Thus Johnny's firmness occasioned the conversion of his father and mother.

Third Commandment of the Church.

To confess at least once a year, and to receive Holy Communion at Easter or within the time appointed.

1. The obligation of going to confession regards all persons over seven years of age who are guilty of mortal sin. Children seven years old and over should already go to confession at least once a year. It would be dangerous to omit this under the pretext that one has not committed a mortal sin, for it is often very difficult to tell whether certain thoughts, words or deeds are mortal or only venial sins.

2. The obligation of receiving holy Communion during the Easter time begins not with the seventh year, for to receive holy Communion worthily one should be both well instructed in the catechism, and also well able to appreciate the holiness and importance of the Sacrament. Children usually are able to do so when, at about twelve years of age, they are admitted to their first holy Communion. As to those children who are very smart and far advanced in their studies and of excellent conduct, they may and should be admitted to their first holy Communion at ten years of age, or even younger.— In the beginning of the Church the Christians used to receive holy Communion every Sunday, and even every day when they assisted at Mass. But in the course of time piety and fervor cooled down, and the people grew so careless, that in 1215 the Council of Lateran commanded all to receive holy Com-

munion at Easter. Christ, in instituting the sacraments of the Holy Eucharist and Penance, did not determine how often people should receive these sacraments, but left it to the Church to do so. The Church appoints Easter as the time for receiving holy Communion, because Jesus Christ instituted the Holy Eucharist on Holy Thursday, and because, as Christ arose to life on Easter Sunday from corporal death, so we should rise at Easter from sin, or spiritual death, to the spiritual life of grace by a good confession and worthy Communion. This is what is meant by doing or performing one's Easter duties.

251. How long does the Easter time generally last?

The Easter time generally lasts from the first Sunday of Lent until Trinity Sunday.

In Catholic countries it lasts only two weeks—from Palm Sunday until the first Sunday after Easter. In the United States it lasts 14 weeks—99 days, to enable all, even people visited only once a month or less often, where priests are scarce, to fulfil their Easter duties. Hence no one may rightly complain of want of opportunity. To defer this duty to the last day or week is not a good sign.

252. In what church ought we to receive Easter Communion?

We ought to receive Easter Communion in our parish church.

He who does not fulfil his Easter duties, shows that he is indifferent to the salvation of his soul and to his union with the Church in life and in death. — Those who neglect their Easter duties the Church has threatened with excommunication, that is, with exclusion from the Church.

We may go to confession in any church, to any approved priest; but, especially for the sake of good example and in compliance with the will of the Bishop, we should receive our Easter Communion in our parish church. A parish is like a large family; and all the members should at least once a year be present at the Communion table. Those who receive holy Communion at other times, may of course, do so in any church they choose. The sick and invalids who cannot go to church, should fulfil their Easter duties at home. Travelers may fulfil theirs in the place where they are at the time.

253. With what punishment has the Church threatened those who do not fulfil their Easter duties?

The Church has threatened those who do not fulfil their Easter duties with excommunication.

Excommunication = Exclusion from the Church.

He who does not fulfil his Easter duties, shows that he is indifferent to the salvation of his soul and to his union with the Church in life and in death.

The obligation of fulfilling the Easter duty is so strict, that the Church threatens those who neglect it, with the greatest of her punishments—excommunication, that is, exclusion or expulsion from the Church. He who is excommunicated, is cut off from the Church, is no longer a member of the Church, no longer shares in her prayers and blessings and can have no share in the heavenly kingdom. He who neglects his Easter duties is not thereby actually excommunicated, but is liable to be excommunicated by the bishop, if the latter deems it proper or necessary. He who neglects his Easter duties for years and dies suddenly or without at least calling for the priest, should be deprived of Christian burial, just as if he had excommunicated himself.

251. In the third commandment, what do the words "at least" indicate?

The words "at least" indicate the desire of the Church that all should frequently receive the sacraments.

In the Sacrament of penance our soul is washed from the stains of sin, which disfigure it far more than material dirt soils the body. If we have our spiritual cleanliness at heart, we should often wash away our soul's stains in the sacrament of penance. In fact, as death is so uncertain and may come upon us suddenly, we should go as often to confession as is necessary to keep out of mortal sin, so that, if death were to come upon us so suddenly that we could not have a priest to attend us, our salvation would still be assured.

In holy Communion we receive the food of our soul—the body and blood of Jesus Christ. Just as the body needs food often to keep up its life and its strength, so does the soul also need its food often to keep up its spiritual life. If we were to feed our body but once a year, it would get weak and die. As the life of our soul is even more precious than that of our body, let us go often to holy Communion in order to keep up our spiritual life.

Application. Be not contented with the least. A good Christian often receives the sacraments: every month, or at least, every three months. At all events, fulfil your Easter duty, that you may not be excluded from the Church.

Those who go but once a year to confession and holy Communion, find it very hard, and usually put it off till the end or near the end of the Easter time; and it sometimes happens that just then something comes in the way, and they miss their Easter

duty. Experience shows that the majority of those who lose the faith or give up its practice altogether, are those who previously contented themselves with going only once a year to confession and holy Communion. The young are exposed to so many dangers when they go into the world to earn a living, that they need more than others to receive the sacraments frequently.

Fourth Commandment of the Church.

Not to join forbidden societies.

This commandment does not directly regard children, it is addressed to those who are grown up. People form societies for certain objects — for pleasure — for mutual help or protection — for insurance, etc. The societies have rules to be observed by the members, and officers to govern them. It is well to join a good society, but wrong to join a bad one. The Church forbids us to join bad societies.

255. What are forbidden societies?

Forbidden societies are

1) those which conspire against the Church or the government;
2) those whose members take the oath of blind obedience and absolute secrecy;
3) those which have a ritual of their own not sanctioned by the Church.

Freemasons, Odd-Fellows, Sons of Temperance, Knights of Pythias.

1. Men who hate the Church unite together and swear they will endeavor to destroy her, and would wish to put the Pope, the bishops and priests to death. Other bad men wish to destroy the lawful government, and unite in a society bound by oath to do all they can to cause its ruin. No Catholic is allowed to join such societies.

2. Those societies are bad, and therefore for-

bidden, which require from their members an oath of inviolable secrecy as to their doings and of unconditional obedience to anything they may be commanded to do. Some societies even require an oath from their members nevermore to go to church, or confession, not to send for the priest on their deathbed, or allow a priest to attend a dying fellow-member. No Catholic can be permitted to join such wicked societies.

3. Those societies which have a divine service or worship of their own not approved by the Church, are bad, because such divine worship is false worship, and is usually only hypocrisy, i. e., trying to make people believe that they believe in God and worship Him. Among the bad societies, the Church has forbidden some of them by name, because they are more dangerous to Catholics than the others—viz., the Freemasons, the Odd Fellows, the Sons of Temperance, the Knights of Pythias. All similar societies are also forbidden by the Church for the reasons given in the answer.

Application. Under no condition become a member of a forbidden society or lodge. You would cease to be a Catholic, and could not receive the sacraments when dying as a member of such society, nor Christian burial after death. Join good, Catholic societies; it will be of great advantage to you.

Dear children, when you get older, be sure never to join any society, outside of Catholic societies, without first consulting your confessor or your pastor and obtaining his consent.

Fifth Commandment of the Church.

To contribute to the support of the church and our pastors.

256. Who is obliged to contribute to the support of the church and the pastors?

Every Catholic who is able to do so is obliged to contribute to the support of the Church and the Pastors.

This commandment is not yet binding on you, but it will be later on, when you are grown up and have means of your own. The greater one's means, the more must he contribute.

257. Why must we contribute to the support of the church and our pastors?

We must contribute to the support of the Church and our Pastors:

1) because otherwise neither the church nor our pastors could subsist,

2) because God and the Church command it.

No church could be built, no divine service celebrated, and no priest could live without these contributions.

"*The laborer is worthy of his hire*" (Luke 10, 7).

"*Know you not, that they who work in the holy place, eat the things that are of the holy place: and they that serve the altar, partake with the altar? So also the Lord ordained that they who preach the gospel, should live by the gospel*" (I. Cor. 9, 13, 14).

He who *will not* obey this commandment, although he is able, cannot be absolved.

The *school* also must be supported by the members of the parish, because without the Christian school, religion cannot subsist.

1. Churches must be built, and altars, pews, confessionals, organ, etc., placed therein; vestments, candles, candlesticks, heating in winter, are needed; the priest, who owes all his time, health and life to his parishioners, needs food and clothing and books, and cannot procure these by exercising a trade or going into business; the parochial school should be

erected and supported; church, school and pastoral residence need repairs now and then. All this costs money; and it is the duty of those who derive spiritual profits from the church and school and from the labors of the priest, to contribute, each according to his means, to cover all these expenses. Those who have but little, should contribute a little; and those who have much, should be so much the more liberal.

2. God wills and the Church commands that all contribute to the support of church, school, pastor and all the parochial works. In the Old Law the Israelites had to contribute every year one-tenth of their gross earnings to the support of the priests, levites and the religious worship, and a similar law was long in force in the Church. And although the law is now more lenient, yet every one is bound in conscience to do his duty. Our Lord says that "every laborer is worthy of his hire;" how much more is not the priest worthy of his support, who devotes his time, talents and even his life for your souls! (Quote text above given, 1 Cor. 9, 13, 14.) This duty is an act, not of charity or choice, but of justice, and he who *will not* fulfil it, who refuses to contribute according to his means to the support of the church and school, and the priests, is as unworthy of absolution as he who refuses to pay his just debts! To contribute to the support of the parochial school is just as necessary as to contribute to the support of the church, for without a good parochial school most of the children will be brought up without religion and will be lost, and the Catholic religion will be gradually rooted out.

Application. Contribute always according to your means to the support of the church, school and priests. Be not stingy towards God and the church; this is the

meanest stinginess. Do not throw the burden of support on others. If you do not contribute your share, you make the holding of divine service difficult or impossible.

Be liberal, generous towards God, who is so bountiful towards you. What you do for the church, school and your priests you do for our Lord Himself. Love to see the church and altars beautifully decorated, and the priest's vestments worthy of God's representative.

Sixth Commandment of the Church.

Not to marry contrary to the laws of the Church.

258. What does the Church forbid those who intend to marry?

The Church forbids those who intend to marry

1) to marry relatives,
2) to marry a non-Catholic,
3) to marry without the triple publication of the banns,
4) to solemnize marriage at forbidden times,
5) to marry before any one but the pastor.

Mixed marriages: when one person is Catholic and the other is not.

This commandment does not yet regard you, but only those who intend to marry.

1. Brothers and sisters are blood relatives of the first degree, having the same father; first cousins are relatives of the second degree, second cousins are of the third degree, and third cousins are of the fourth degree; all these are forbidden to marry one another. Also a widower may not marry any of his dead wife's relatives as far as the fourth

degree; nor may a widow marry any of her dead husband's relatives as far as the fourth degree.

2. Non-Catholics are persons either baptized or not baptized. The Church, for good reasons, does not like to see a Catholic contract a mixed marriage, that is, marrying a non-Catholic.

3. The marriage should be preceded by three publications of the banns in church at the parochial Mass, and should be performed at Nuptial Mass before the parish priest and two witnesses. The publication of banns is to find out whether there is not some secret lawful hindrance to prevent the marriage, such as relationship, a previous marriage still binding, etc.

4. This is explained in 260.

5. The parish priest, or pastor, alone has the right to marry his parishioners. When the parties live in different parishes, they may be married by either pastor; the usual custom is that they are married by the pastor of the bride.

259. Why does the Church abhor and forbid mixed marriages?

The Church abhors and forbids mixed marriages

1) because there is no true unity in them,

2) because the Catholic is in danger of losing his faith,

3) because the children usually are not brought up as good Catholics.

1. There is not the union in mixed marriages that there should be between husband and wife. They should be united especially in what pertains to their principal duty on earth—the practice of

religion—the salvation of their soul; but in this they are entirely disunited.

2. The danger of Catholics in mixed marriages is that they may lose their faith, either by giving up its practice to please the non-Catholic, or by getting gradually indifferent and careless.

3. In bringing up the children both the father and the mother should work in harmony, in unison, especially in the religious training. But it is just in this that in mixed marriages the father and mother differ among themselves; and this difference usually has a bad effect on the children; for they, especially after leaving school, usually grow careless and lose the little religious instruction and practice they may have learned.

260. Which are the forbidden times?

The forbidden times are

1) from the first Sunday of Advent until Epiphany (Jan. 6),
2) from Ash-Wednesday until the first Sunday after Easter.

The forbidden times are partly times of penance and partly times of great feasts, and are, therefore, not suitable for marriage feasts, which are attended usually with worldly pleasures and dissipation.

Application. He who intends to marry should do so according to the laws and wishes of the Church: he then enters the state of matrimony properly, and may hope for God's blessing. A good Catholic will not contract a mixed marriage.

Those who intend to get married should, before making any arrangements, consult their confessor or pastor, so that they may be married according to the laws of the Church, and thus draw God's blessing on their marriage.

Avoiding Evil and Doing Good.

Conscience.

261. How do we know what is good or evil?

We know what is good or evil by our conscience.

To find out whether what we are about to do is good or evil, all we need is to reflect in our mind and we shall, as it were, hear an interior voice saying either: "That is good, do it," or "That is evil, do not do it." That interior voice is our conscience.

262. What does conscience do?

Conscience warns us against evil, and admonishes us to do what is good.

If we *have done* something good, conscience gives us joy and peace; if we have done something evil, it tortures us and makes us uneasy.

Remorse of conscience. A good conscience and a guilty conscience. We say: He has not a good conscience.

Before we do a thing, if we reflect on it as we should our conscience tells us whether what we intend to do is good or evil, urges us to do the good, and warns us not to do what is evil. After we have done a thing that is good, our conscience approves our act and makes us feel pleased. After we have done a thing that is bad, our conscience condemns us, and, if what we have done is very bad, it leaves us no rest and reproaches us, until we have either confessed the evil or repaired it. Those who usually obey their conscience are said to have a good conscience; and those who usually disobey it are said to have a bad conscience.

263. Who gave us our conscience?

God the Most Holy gave us our conscience.

It is the voice of God in man, and an image of His sanctity and justice.—He who acts against his conscience, acts against God and His holy will: he sins.

God, who is most holy and just, loves and wills only what is good, and rewards it, and hates and punishes what is evil. He has given us our conscience as an image of His holiness and justice, so that it may point out to us what is good and what is evil, induce us to love and do what is good, and to hate and avoid what is evil, and makes us feel good when we do what is good, and to feel bad and uneasy when we do evil. If we disobey our conscience, we disobey God's voice in us, and thus commit sin.

Application. Always obey the voice of conscience. Never do anything that your conscience forbids. If a man never listens to his conscience, it will finally cease to speak to him: he will become hardened—and capable of committing any sin.

Sin.

264. Who commits sin?

He commits sin who knowingly and wilfully transgresses a divine commandment.

Transgresses = disobeys.
Disobedience towards God. Omitting something that God has commanded, or doing what God has forbidden.

We commit sin only when we *knowingly* and *willfully* do what God forbids. Little children sometimes do things that are very bad, but do not commit sin, because they know no better. It is no sin, for instance, to eat meat on Friday, if you do not know it is Friday. Why?—it is no sin for a person sick

in bed to miss Mass on a Sunday. Why?—Because these things are not done knowingly and wilfully.

265. In how many ways can we sin?

We can sin

1) by thoughts,
2) by desires,
3) by words,
4) by actions,
5) by omissions.

Development of sin: first come *bad thoughts* (mere temptations), then *taking pleasure* therein, after which follow *evil desires,* then the *bad resolution,* then the *sinful deed* — finally habitual sinning = *vice.*

1. We sin by thought only when we knowingly and wilfully think of what it is sinful to think of; for instance, if we wilfully doubt in our mind about any of the truths of faith, if we wilfully think evil of our parents, and the like. If evil thoughts come into our mind, we should try to drive them away at once, and if we find it hard to do so, we should pray and say: "Jesus, Mary, help me!" If we do this, we do not commit sin, but perform a good act.

2. He who desires to do something evil, commits sin.

3. Also he commits sin who says things that are sinful, for instance, tells lies, curses, answers his parents back.

4. He commits sin who knowingly and wilfully commits an act forbidden by any of the commandments.

5. Also he commits sin who neglects to perform the duties prescribed to him; for instance, to hear Mass on a Sunday or a Holyday, to go to school, when sent by his parents, to pray, etc.

266. Who commits a grievous sin?

He commits a grievous sin who wilfully transgresses a commandment in an important matter.

Three requisites: 1, an important matter; 2, a clear understanding; 3, a full consent of the will.

There is a great difference in sins, for instance: between a little blow and a murder, between stealing a nickel and stealing $1,000. One sin is light or venial, and the other grievous.

1. Three things make up a grievous sin. First, an important matter, for instance, God's command not to eat the forbidden fruit, under severe penalty; the murder of Abel by Cain; our Lord's betrayal by Judas, the neglect of hearing Mass, the eating of meat on Fridays.

2. Only he who has a clear understanding of his duty in an important matter can commit a grievous sin; if he does not know what he is doing, or that the act is very bad, he is not guilty of a grievous sin.

3. And lastly, he must do the act of his own free will.

267. Why are grievous sins called mortal sins?

Grievous sins are called mortal sins because they rob the soul of the life of grace, and bring on it eternal death.

Sanctifying grace is the spiritual life of the soul, for it makes the soul live for heaven, renders it the child of God. Grievous sins take away sanctifying grace from the soul, rob it of its spiritual life, make it spiritually dead and bring it to everlasting death—hell. These sins are, then, truly mortal, for they spiritually kill the soul.

268. Who commits a venial sin?

He commits a venial sin who transgresses a commandment in a less important matter, or not quite wilfully.

If in an evil deed one of the three requisites for mortal sin is wanting, the sin is only venial. (Exercise the children in distinguishing between mortal and venial sin as to importance of matter; for instance: false oath and pronouncing God's name with levity; missing Mass on Sunday and coming a little late; striking one's parents and not at once obeying, etc.) He commits only a venial sin who, though his act is very sinful, sincerely believes that it is not very sinful. He does not give full consent who, loitering on the way to Mass on Sunday, nevertheless thinks he will be in time, but arrives at church when Mass is nearly over.

Why do we make so great a distinction between mortal and venial sins? Because we are bound to confess every mortal sin, for it kills our soul and leads it to hell; but we are not bound to confess our venial sins, though it is well to do so, because they do not kill the soul or deprive it of sanctifying grace, and we can get them forgiven by contrition, acts of penance and good works in this life, or by the pains of purgatory in the next.

269. Why is mortal sin the greatest evil?

Mortal sin is the greatest evil

1) because it grievously offends God,
2) because it makes us unhappy for time and eternity.

Disobedience, ingratitude.

The punishment of the angels — of our first parents — eternal punishment — Christ on the Cross.

1. We call whatever gives us pain or displeasure an evil; for instance, a bruise, a cut, a burn, anything painful, poverty, a loss. We fear and shun evils. But sin is the greatest of all evils, and should be dreaded and shunned above all others. Mortal sin is the greatest of sins, and hence the very greatest of evils, for it grievously offends God. He who commits it disobeys God, revolts against God, prefers his own will to God's will, prefers sin to God. God commands, and the sinner in sinning says, as it were, to God: "I do not care for Thee; I will not do what Thou commandest; I will do what I like; I will satisfy my passion; I do not care, if Thou wilt condemn me to hell for it; I prefer going to hell forever rather than to do Thy will or overcome myself a little." This is a dreadful insult to God who deserves all our respect and all our submission. It is also the greatest ingratitude towards God, to whom we owe everything—our life, our body, our senses, our soul, all that we have, all that we are; who has made heaven for us, and has loved us so much as to die on the cross to save us from hell and bring us to heaven.

2. Mortal sin renders us unhappy both in this life and in the next. In this life it causes us to lose sanctifying grace and our peace of mind, fills us with remorse, and exposes us to many temporal evils; for instance, often it brings on sickness, consumption, insanity and death. It exposes us to eternal damnation, for he who dies with even only one mortal sin in his soul, shall be damned forever! In fact, it is the only thing that will damn us. Oh! resolve never to commit a mortal sin, rather to suffer everything and even to die than be guilty of it!

3. The punishment God inflicts on those who commit it, shows us its great wickedness. God

had created numberless beautiful angels to be happy forever with Him in heaven. One third of them sinned, revolted against God, and at once God created hell, and cast them forever into hell, there, as hideous monsters, to suffer fearful torments for all eternity. Never shall they be forgiven or released! For one sin of disobedience, God drove our first parents out of the earthly paradise, condemned them and all their posterity to all kinds of evils and to death. And in order to expiate or do enough penance for sin and to save man from hell, because no creature, not even all men and angels together could do so, the Son of God became man and died on the cross the most painful and shameful of deaths. When you look at the crucifix, you can see how much God hates sin, how great an evil sin is, since He so fearfully punished His innocent Son, because He bore our sins and undertook to satisfy for them. Therefore hate sin and love Jesus Christ.

270. What do we lose by mortal sin?

By mortal sin we lose

1). sanctifying grace,

2) Heaven,

3) all our merits.

1. Sanctifying grace renders our soul wonderfully beautiful, makes it a beloved child of God. A single mortal sin causes the soul to lose all its beauty, and to become hideous and loathsome and hateful to God, and to be cursed by Him.

2. When we possess sanctifying grace, we have a right, a claim to heaven. A single mortal sin makes us lose this right, and if we die in it, we shall never see or enjoy heaven.

3. Mortal sin destroys all the wealth, the merits of our soul. When we are in the state of grace, and we have a good intention, each one of our thoughts, words and acts become deserving of a particular glory in heaven. Now if we had gained as much merit as St. Paul, or even as the Blessed Virgin, and would commit one mortal sin, we should lose the same; for mortal sin completely destroys the merits previously gained, and also prevents us from acquiring merit. A person in mortal sin can gain no merit for heaven, even if he prayed all day, fasted on bread and water, and performed as many good deeds as the greatest saints, and why? Because he is spiritually dead! Be sure to dread mortal sin and to pray every day to Jesus and Mary to preserve you from it. Say morning and evening: "O Mary, my Mother, preserve me this day from mortal sin." Then add three Hail Marys. (200 days' indulgence.)

Anecdote.—There was a boy who was pure and pious, and the joy of his parents and teachers. He often went to confession and holy Communion and had hardly anything but a few venial sins to confess. One morning he was found dead in his bed. His confessor tried to console his parents by telling them how good he had been, and then went to the church that same morning to say Mass for him. He was beginning to vest, when he felt the amice snatched out of his hands; turning around he saw no one. He again tried to put on the amice, and it was again snatched out of his hands; this happened again the third time; and then he heard a voice saying to him: "Do not say Mass for me, for it is no use, for I am damned, because yesterday I committed my first mortal sin, and I died in it, and am now forever in hell on account of it."

271. Why should we also avoid venial sin?

We should also avoid venial sin:

1) because it offends God,

2) because it brings many temporal punishments upon us,

3) because it gradually leads to mortal sin.

1. Many are afraid to commit a mortal sin, because it leads to hell, but do not worry about venial sin. But we should avoid venial sin more than all physical evils in the world, because venial sin offends and displeases God, and the physical evils do not. If we loved God truly, we would obey Him in little, as well as in great things, and would dread giving Him the least displeasure.

2. Venial sin draws down punishments even in this life; for instance, because of it Moses was not permitted to enter the promised land, Zachary became dumb. We must do penance for every venial sin, either in this life, or in purgatory, in the next. The pains of purgatory for a single venial sin are far more terrible than all the pains and sufferings in this world.

3. Venial sin leads by degrees into mortal sin, and thence to hell. People do not become very bad all at once. The thief in the penitentiary began by stealing at first only little trifles; then he gradually stole more. The same happened to every great sinner, to every great criminal. "He that despiseth little things, shall fall by little and little."

Application. *"My son"* . . . said Tobias, *"all the days of thy life have God in thy mind, but take heed thou never consent to sin. We lead indeed a poor life, but we shall have many good things if we fear God, and depart from all sin, and do that which is good"* (Tob. 4, 6, 23).

Temptations and Occasions of Sin.

272. What generally leads us into sin?

Temptations and sinful occasions generally lead us into sin.

273. What are temptations?

Temptations are thoughts and suggestions which entice us to sin.

274. Whence do temptations come?

Temptations come from the devil, from wicked fellow-men, or from our evil inclinations.

The threefold evil inclination: concupiscence of the eyes, concupiscence of the flesh, pride of life.

The devil tempts us, that he may lead us into sin and drag us into hell with him. Bad men, bad companions, by their words and example, entice us to sin even more powerfully than the devil. The most powerful temptations come from our evil inclinations. As an effect of original sin we are more inclined to evil than to good, and to do good we must struggle and overcome our evil inclinations. Concupiscence of the eyes is covetousness, love of wealth, of money; concupiscence of the flesh is impurity, and the pride of life is pride, ambition and the like.

275. When do temptations become sinful?

Temptations become sinful when we do not resist them, or when we take wilful pleasure in them.

(See explanation of questions 228 and 265.) In itself temptation is not a sin; even the most holy persons may be sorely tempted. But if we do not resist them, if we take wilful pleasure in them,

they become sinful. If we resist and overcome them, we perform a good and meritorious work deserving of reward in heaven.

276. How must we resist temptations?

We must resist temptations immediately by praying, and by turning our thoughts to other things.

When a spark of fire falls on our clothes we shake it off instantly.

As soon as we perceive the temptation, we must pray, saying, for instance: "Jesus, Mary help me! Holy guardian angel, assist me!" Then let us try to think of other things. These two things you must do at once, just as you would at once brush off a spark of fire on your clothes.

277. What are sinful occasions?

Sinful occasions are places, persons, or things by which we are easily led into sin.

For instance, the saloon is a sinful occasion for those who are addicted to excessive drinking; bad companions are a sinful occasion also, especially for the young; bad books and bad pictures, bad newspapers and magazines. We must carefully avoid them.

278. Which are the most common occasions of sin?

The most common occasions of sin are: bad company, bad theaters and dances, bad books, pictures and newspapers.

279. What must we do, when we happen to be in the occasion of sin?

When we happen to be in the occasion of sin, we must leave it as soon as possible.

He who carelessly seeks an occasion of sin is already guilty of sin.

"*He that loveth danger shall perish in it*" (Eccli. 3, 27).

As soon as you, without any fault of yours, find yourself in bad company or in any other occasion of sin, leave it at once, for, if you do not, you already commit sin by exposing yourself wilfully to the danger of committing sin. He who does not leave it, or who wilfully goes into the occasion of sin, shows that he wishes to sin, and therefore already sins. We must not expose ourselves wilfully to the danger of sinning, for being already naturally prone to evil, we shall surely fall into sin.

Application. Carefully avoid every occasion of sin and resist all temptations. He that resists temptations gains merits for Heaven; he that takes pleasure therein, commits sin. When bad thoughts come to your mind, banish them *immediately*. "*Watch ye and pray that ye enter not into temptation*" (Matt. 26, 41).

Be always on your guard and watch lest you fall into temptation and get into occasions of sin. And pray for grace and strength to overcome the temptation as soon as you perceive it.

Vice.

280. What is vice?

Vice is the habit of indulging one's evil desires, and of sinning grievously.

We acquire a habit by accustoming ourselves to do a thing and doing it frequently. At first it is difficult—like walking to a young child, but by degrees it becomes easier and pleasant, and thus becomes a habit. A habit becomes so deeply rooted in us as to be very difficult and almost impossible to get rid of it. The habit of doing something very bad and sinful is called a vice.

281. Which are the principal vices?

The principal vices are:

1) pride,
2) covetousness,
3) lust,
4) envy,
5) gluttony,
6) anger,
7) sloth.

They are also called *capital sins,* because they are the main sources of many other sins.

282. Who is proud?

He is proud who considers himself better than he is, and who wishes to be honored more than he deserves.

"*Pride is the beginning of all sin*" (Eccli. 10, 15). "*God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble*" (Jas. 4, 6). "*Every one that exalteth himself, shall be humbled*" (Luke 14, 11). Pride precedes the fall. The proud man can bear neither superior nor equal.

Vanity (on account of clothing, beauty, etc.), *Pride* (on account of wealth, talents), *Haughtiness*, arrogance.

The proud think wonders of themselves, prefer themselves to others, and seek to be honored. Some children are proud, because they have fine clothes, others, because they can learn better than their companions, others because their parents are rich, others because they can sing well. But this is foolishness, for all this does not make them better than others. The proud like to speak and boast about themselves. Proud children become proud people when they grow up. Pride is the beginning of all sin. The first sin committed was a sin of pride, for it was through pride that the angels rebelled against God and became devils. Pride was

also the cause of the sin of our first parents, for they wished to become like God. God hates the proud, because they rob Him of the honor due to Him; for if we possess anything good, it is God who has given it to us; we should then not glory in it, as if it were our own, but should give glory to God for it, as the humble do. Therefore God hates the proud and gives His grace to the humble. —(Relate and explain the parable of the pharisee and publican praying in the temple.) The proud and haughty are apt to fall into many other sins; for instance, into unbelief, because they are too proud to submit their reason to what God has revealed; they are usually disobedient, envious of others, hate and despise their fellowmen; are apt to lie, to swear falsely, to slander their neighbor. Beware of pride and vanity and haughtiness. If you have anything good in you, or are praised, give glory to God for it. It matters not what people think or say of you, but it matters much what God thinks of you. God does not regard wealth, beauty, fine clothes, etc., but only our heart, our conduct.

283. Who is covetous?

He is covetous who has too great a love for money and earthly goods, and gives nothing to the poor or for other good purposes.

"They that will become rich fall into temptation, and into the snare of the devil . . . For the desire of money is the root of all evils" (I. Tim. 6, 9, 10). *"The covetous shall not possess the kingdom of God"* (I. Cor. 6, 10).

Covetousness leads to hardness of heart.

A miser is covetous; he is so fond of money, that he cares for nothing else, and makes use of every means to increase his money. Nothing is more foolish than covetousness. Misers, with plenty of money, usually live and dress more poorly than the

poorest beggars, and never enjoy their money on earth, nor can they take it along with them after death. Covetousness is sinful, for the covetous love money more than they love God and their neighbor, and would let the poor starve, before they would give them any assistance. The covetous, says St. Paul, shall not go to heaven, for, says the Holy Ghost, covetousness is the root of all evil. It leads to lying, cheating, swindling, perjury, etc. Uusually no one can get rich fast without sin. Those who are anxious to get rich at any price, fall into all kinds of temptations and yield to them, in order to make money. (See above 1 Tim. 6, 9, 10.) Boys and girls who are stingy and love to hoard up things, and especially money, usually become misers when they grow up.

284. Who is unchaste?

He is unchaste who indulges in immodest thoughts, words or actions.

Sixth and ninth commandments.

285. Who is envious?

He is envious who is sad at the good fortune of others, and rejoices at their misfortune.

"By the envy of the devil, death came into the world. And they follow him that are of his side" (Wis. 2, 24).

Cain; the brothers of Joseph.

You are glad if something good happens to you; you should also be glad, when something good happens to others. Why? Because you should love your neighbor as yourself. He is envious who is sorry to see something good in others or happening to them. Just like the devil envied our first parents. Just like Cain envied his brother Abel, because God was more pleased with Abel's offering than with his. Just like the brothers of Joseph, who

envied him, because their father loved him more than them. In like manner, some children envy those who are better dressed, who learn better, who are more loved, etc. And some even have a malicious joy at the misfortunes of their companions. Envy is the most silly of vices, for the envious worry and make themselves miserable without reaping any benefit therefrom; when others are happy, they remain sad and unhappy. Envy is very sinful, and leads to hell, for it is most uncharitable. The envious have no place in heaven, where all are so happy, but only in hell. (See above Wisd. 2, 24.) Envy is the cause of many sins. It induced Cain to murder Abel, the brothers of Joseph, to sell him as a slave, and the Jews, to slander, persecute and crucify our Lord. Avoid envy; be not like the devil, but like the angels that rejoice at the good of others.

286. Who is gluttonous?

He is gluttonous who eats and drinks too much or too greedily.

"*Take heed to yourselves, lest perhaps your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness and the cares of this life: and that day (of judgment) come upon you suddenly*" (Luke 21, 34).

Greediness, daintiness, drunkenness, etc.

He is a glutton who eats or drinks more than is good for him, who eats or drinks too greedily, who is fond of delicacies and dislikes plain food. The worst sin of gluttony is drunkenness, excess in drinking strong liquors. The drunkard is worse than a beast, for he does not stop when he has enough, and often drowns his reason in liquor and knows no longer what he is doing; he loses his good name, is despised by all respectable persons, impoverishes himself, gets angry, curses, quarrels,

fights, commits even murder, steals, cheats, beats his family, disgraces them, lets them starve, and often even murders his wife and children, and not unfrequently dies like a beast in his drunken stupor and goes to hell. (See above Luke 2, 34.)

(Warn the children against fondness for spirituous liquors; recommend total abstinence—the shunning of saloons and drunkards—and the joining of some Catholic temperance society.)

287. Who is given to anger?

He is given to anger who easily becomes provoked if things are not as he wishes.

"*The anger of man worketh not the justice of God* (Jas. 1, 20).

If a person were always what he is in a passion of anger, he would be fit for an insane asylum.

There is a holy anger; for instance, when your father sees you doing something really bad, and gets excited about it and punishes you. When Jesus saw how the buyers and sellers were desecrating the temple, He made a whip and drove them out of the temple. An unholy anger is when a person gets over-excited into a passion, and hardly knows or even does not know what he is saying or doing. For instance, a teamster is mad because his team will not pull as he wishes, and begins to curse and swear, and unmercifully beats his horses. Children get mad at one another, at things that don't go as they wish; they then get red in the face, their heart beats quick, and they use intemperate language, and even strike others, break things, etc., without knowing or realizing what they are saying or doing. Anger sometimes makes people very sick, and even kills them, for then the blood rushes to their head, and a blood vessel bursts in the brain, and they drop down dead.

Anger is sinful, and the source of other sins, such as cursing, fighting, and even murder. (See above Jas. 1, 20.)

Meekness is the opposite of anger. A person is meek when he remains calm, whatever may happen to him, and bears quietly even insults. Whilst a missionary was preaching to the pagans in Japan, a man came up to him, and spit into his face. The missionary said nothing, wiped his face and continued preaching, just as if nothing had happened. His meekness was the cause why many were converted to the faith. Some children easily get angry, and commit many sins in anger. They should pray for patience every morning and evening, at holy Mass, and especially when they feel themselves getting angry, they should say: "O Jesus, give me patience! O Mary, help me to be patient." When you feel angry, try to overcome yourself and pray, and do not speak or act until you are calm again, and thus you will overcome your anger, avoid sin and gain merit for heaven.

288. Who is slothful?

He is slothful who shirks the exertion and labor necessary for his temporal and eternal welfare.

"*Idleness hath taught many much evil*" (Eccli. 33, 29). Idleness is the beginning of all vice. "*I would thou wert cold, or hot: But because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will begin to vomit thee out of my mouth*" (Apoc. 3, 15, 16). "*Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, shall be cut down, and shall be cast into the fire*" (Matt. 7, 19).

The slothful person hates work, hates exertion. The slothful child hates study. We must exert ourselves, we must work for our earthly welfare. God said to Adam: "Thou shalt eat thy bread in the

sweat of thy brow." "He who does not work, should not eat," says St. Paul. We must also work for our eternal welfare—that is, believe, keep the commandments, combat and overcome temptation, pray and receive the sacraments. To save our soul we must conquer sloth, exert ourselves very much, for Christ says: "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent bear it away."

Sloth is the parent of vice. Look at the tramps, the loafers, the thieves and other criminals; it is sloth that makes them such; they are too lazy to earn an honest living. Children who are habitually lazy, will become good for nothing, and will soon fall into various vices. (Quote Eccli. 33, 29 and other texts given above.) You should, therefore, avoid idleness, and exert yourselves to learn, to work, to perform your duty, no matter how difficult it may be, and you will be blessed in time and in eternity.

Good Works.

289. What are good works?

Good works are such works that are pleasing to God.

It is not enough for us to shun evil in order to go to heaven, we must also do good. Except little children dying after baptism, no one can go to heaven without doing good works. As a tree to be good, must produce good fruits, so we, to be good, must perform good works. Our Lord says that every tree that does not produce good fruit, shall be cut down and be cast into the fire. In like manner if we do not perform good works in our lifetime we shall be cast into the fire of hell

after our death. Our Lord explains this in two parables. 1. There were ten virgins invited to a wedding; they had to come to it with lighted lamps. Five of them had oil in their lamps and had them lighted, and were admitted to the wedding. The other five could not light their lamps, because they had no oil in them, and they were refused admittance to the wedding. The wedding represents heaven; the oil, good works. Those who have good works are admitted into heaven, and those who have none are refused admittance.—2. A King about to go to a distant country, gave money to his servants to trade with till he would come back. To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one. When he came back, the man who had received five talents brought ten talents to him, having gained five talents in doing business. The one who had received two talents brought four talents, having gained two in the same way. But he who had received one talent, brought it back, for he had remained idle. Now because he had not gained anything, although he had not stolen it or spent it, he was condemned. God is the King, we are His servants; the talents are the graces God gives us, that with them we may perform good works and make gains for heaven. If we perform no good works and make no gains, we shall after death be condemned to hell, "where there is howling and gnashing of teeth." It is not enough, says St. James, for us to have faith; we must show our faith by our good works, otherwise our faith is dead and unable to save us. At the general judgment Jesus Christ will condemn many to hell, not so much for sinful deeds as for their failure to do good works: "Depart from Me, ye cursed," etc.

Good works please God, who is Goodness itself and loves all that is good. We call good works

not only good deeds, but also good thoughts, good desires, good words.

290. When are our good works meritorious?

Our good works are meritorious when we do them in the state of grace, and with a good intention.

Meritorious = deserving of reward.

1. Mortal sin not only robs us of the merits we may have already gained, but, by making us enemies of God, prevents us from pleasing Him, and from gaining any merits. To gain merit before God, we must be pleasing to Him. If we performed in the state of sin as many good works as St. Paul, they would have no merit before God, and would deserve no reward in heaven. Still he who is in the state of sin should pray and perform good works, for they may obtain for him the grace of conversion. A man was about to die, and sent for the priest; he had stayed away from confession and had led a bad life for over thirty years; but all that time he had daily said a Hail Mary, as he had promised his mother on her deathbed. It was this prayer that obtained his conversion. It is believed that a good confession restores the merits gained before mortal sin was committed.

2. To gain merit before God we must do our good works for God, by making a good intention, such as: "All for Thee, O Lord!"

291. What do we merit by each good work?

By each good work we merit more grace on earth and a greater reward in Heaven.

1. By each good work sanctifying grace is increased in us, and our soul is rendered more beau-

tiful. The more good works we perform (enumerate some), the more beautiful our soul becomes.

2. Every good work we do will be rewarded in heaven by a new degree of glory and happiness which will last forever.—There was once a hermit who lived by himself far away from towns and people. He spent his time in work and prayer, and lived only on fruits and water. But he had to go a long distance to get the water. He one day began to think that he ought to put up his little hut nearer to the spring, so that he would not have so far to go for water. He then heard someone behind him counting one—two—three—four—five. He looked around and saw a beautiful young man. Astonished at this, he asked him. "Who are you?" The young man answered: "I am an angel. God sent me to count your steps, for God will give you a special reward in heaven for each step you take." The angel then disappeared. The hermit then, instead of putting his hut nearer to the spring, moved it still farther away, so that he might get greater reward in heaven for his steps. Let us often think of this, and perform as many good works as we can.

292. When is our intention good?

Our intention is good when we wish to perform our works for the honor of God.

Eating, drinking, studying, working, playing, resting, etc.; in short everything is meritorious if done with a good intention.

"*Whosoever shall give to drink to one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple* (= for love of Me), *amen I say to you, he shall not lose his reward*" (Matt. 10, 42. Mark. 9, 40).

"*Whether you eat or drink, or whatsoever else you do: do all to the glory of God*" (I. Cor. 10, 31).

When we do something, we do it for a certain

purpose—for a certain end. This purpose, this end is here called intention. Why do you go to Mass, may be expressed also by—What is your intention in going to Mass? A good intention is when we do a thing for God. God will not reward us, unless we work for Him, just as a rich man will not pay those who do not work for him, for he does not owe them anything, no matter how much they may work, so long as they do not work for him. In like manner, no matter how much we do, we shall get no reward from God in heaven for it, unless we do it for God. On the other hand the good intention, like the philosopher's stone which was to turn all the base metals (lead, iron, etc.) into gold, turns into holy and meritorious works all our actions, even our work, study, play, our recreation, taking our meals and our sleep! How easily then can we get rich for all eternity, in heaven. (See above text of Matt. 10, 42 and 1 Cor. 10, 31.) It does not matter so much with God if what we do is great or only little; He looks more to our good intention, to our love for Him. If we do for Him and give Him all we can, be it ever so little, He is as well pleased with us as with others who may do even much more. One day our Lord and His apostles were in the temple looking at the people putting their offerings into the box. Some put in large sums; others less. At last a poor widow came and put in only two mites (two cents). Our Lord said that she had given to God more than all the others, because the others could easily spare what they had offered, but she gave *all* that she had, and hence pleased God more. Also the harder it is for you to do your duty, the more you please God if you do it cheerfully. For instance, your mother tells you in the morning to get up; but you feel so sleepy and it is so cold; or you are in the midst of a game so

interesting, and your mother calls you. Now it is very hard for you to obey in either case. But, if you at once cheerfully obey, oh! how pleasing you are to God!

293. How do we make a good intention?

We make a good intention by thinking or saying: O my God, all for Thy honor!—or: For the love of God.

You see how easy it is to make a good intention. We may also offer up our works for the souls in purgatory, as a penance for our sins. The sign of the cross includes a good intention. We ought to make a good intention every morning at rising, offering to God all our thoughts, words and actions of the day. It would be well to renew our good intention whenever we begin an action. We should not fail to make a good intention in our sufferings, in our trials, in our crosses. Let us not lose the merit of our works, but let us enrich ourselves for heaven.—There was once a rich and learned man who had written many books, made many discoveries and built even some churches. He once had a dream in which he saw angels writing in a large book. He asked them what they were writing. They replied: "The good works of men." He then requested them to show him what they had written down about him. They showed him a page almost entirely blank. He said: "How is this? I have performed so many great things, and you have not written them down!" "No," said an angel, "we write down only what men do for the love of God!" Do you understand?

294. What good works are especially pleasing to God?

The good works especially pleasing to God are: prayer, fasting and alms deeds.

"Prayer is good with fasting and alms, more than to lay up treasures of gold" (Tob. 12, 8).

Prayer: all works of devotion, hearing Mass, receiving the sacraments.

Fasting: all works of mortification and self-denial.

Alms deeds: all works of mercy and charity.

1. By prayer are meant all works of piety and devotion; not only prayers recited, but pious reflections, hearing or serving Mass, pious hymns, hearing sermons or instructions, reading good books, kissing the crucifix, etc.

2. By fasting are meant, not only fasting and abstinence from flesh-meat, but all acts of self-denial, of mortification; for instance, getting up early, keeping silence, modesty of the eyes, denying one's self delicacies, candy, fruit, etc., etc.

3. By alms are meant all the works by which we can assist our neighbor—all the works of both corporal and spiritual mercy.

By prayer, fasting and alms-deeds we give to God what we are and what we have. By prayer we give to God our soul and overcome pride. By fasting we give to God our body and overcome lust. By alms-deeds we give to God what we have and overcome covetousness.

295. What good works must we perform above all?

Above all we must

1) faithfully keep the commandments of God and of the Church,

2) fulfil the duties of our state of life.

1. There can be no salvation and no pleasing God if we do not keep the commandments faithfully.

2. Everyone must fulfil the duties of his state of life, else he cannot please God, or be saved. The priest must faithfully perform his special duties

as priest, parents must perform their special duties as parents, and children must faithfully perform their special duties as children.

296. Which are the corporal works of mercy?

The corporal works of mercy are:

1) to feed the hungry,
2) to give drink to the thirsty,
3) to give shelter to the homeless,
4) to clothe the naked,
5) to visit the sick,
6) to ransom the captives,
7) to bury the dead.

1. Do not be hard-hearted; do not fail to help the poor; to give food to the hungry; to divide your lunch with a poor child that has nothing to eat and is very hungry. There are poor people, poor children, who are so poor that they starve to death! Never refuse bread to the poor.

2. Give drink to the thirsty; God will reward every cup of cold water you give to the thirsty.

3. Hospitality is a Christian virtue; give shelter to those who have no place to sleep, especially in winter, or give them enough to pay for a night's lodging.

4. When you see a poor child half-clothed, shivering with cold, do like St. Martin, who, when he was still a soldier, saw a beggar almost naked, shivering with cold; he cut his cloak in half and gave half of it to the beggar; the next night Jesus appeared to him clothed with the half cloak Martin had given to the beggar, saying to the angels: "See, it was Martin who gave Me this to protect Me against the cold." Hence you see that Jesus considers as done to Himself what we do for our fellow-men.

5. We ought to visit our sick companions, especially the poor, and bring them some food, some delicacies. (Mention some of the religious orders devoted to corporal works of mercy.)

6. As to poor slaves, as to innocent prisoners, we ought to do all we can to relieve or release them. (Relate about the Order of Mercy for the redemption of captives—the White Fathers of Cardinal Lavigerie in Africa.)

7. To assist devoutly at funerals, to contribute to bury the poor, are works we should perform according to our ability.

Those who faithfully perform these works of mercy with a good intention will be rewarded with heaven at the last day, because Christ considers as done to Himself what we do for our fellow-men; but He will condemn to everlasting fire those who have refused to perform the works of mercy towards their fellow-men, because He will consider their refusal as directed towards Himself.

297. Which are the spiritual works of mercy?

The spiritual works of mercy are:

1) to admonish the sinner,
2) to instruct the ignorant,
3) to counsel the doubtful,
4) to comfort the sorrowful,
5) to bear wrongs patiently,
6) to forgive all injuries,
7) to pray for the living and the dead.

1. If you were to see some one in danger of being run over without noticing it, you would warn him, cry out to him. In like manner, the sinner is in danger of losing his soul; he is on the way to hell and perhaps does not realize it. It is an act of charity to admonish him of his danger.

Priests, parents, teachers are bound in duty to warn and admonish those entrusted to them when they commit sin, or are in danger of falling into sin. As to those who are not entrusted to us, we are bound only out of charity to admonish them, if we have a good opportunity and some chance of success. For instance, you see some companion doing wrong, or about to do wrong; say to him: "Do not do that, for it is wrong." If your admonition does not help, and the fault is serious, and especially if it is habitual and may do great harm, you should inform his parents, his teacher, or the priest, so that they may stop his evil conduct.

2. The ignorant here meant are those who do not know the catechism, their duties. Priests, parents and teachers instruct the ignorant and can gain each time an indulgence of one hundred days. You can do so by helping someone to learn his catechism, by contributing to the support of missionaries among the heathen.

3. As yet the best counsel you can give to those in doubt is to advise them to ask their parents, or the priest, or to pray to God for light.

4. Tell those who are in pain, or trouble, or grief, to be resigned to God's holy will, to bear it all for the love of God, and to have recourse to prayer for patience and resignation.

5. When any one ill-treats you or pains you, bear it patiently, and do not take revenge, and

6. For the love of God and for the forgiveness of your own sins by God, forgive all who may have injured you.

7. We may not be able to do much for our fellow-men, but one thing we all can do is to pray for the living and the dead, especially for those for whom we are bound to pray. God does not wish us to be selfish, for in teaching us how to

pray, He requires us to pray for one another by saying: "Our Father," not "my Father," and "forgive us our trespasses," and not "forgive me," etc.

Application. Let no day pass without doing some good work, otherwise it is a day lost. "*In doing good, let us not fail: for in due time we shall reap*" (Gal. 6, 9). Remember the saying of our Lord: "*As long as you did it to one of these My least brethren, you did it to Me*" (Matt. 25, 40). And: "*Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy*" (Matt. 5, 7).

Do not fail to make the good intention every morning, and resolve then already to perform some good work during the day; for instance, to hear Mass, to help some poor person, to deny yourself some delicacy. Just as the farmer does not give up plowing, planting, etc., although it is wearisome, because he looks for a good harvest, so we also should not grow weary doing good during life, being mindful of the harvest of glory and happiness that will be ours in eternity. In doing acts of charity toward others, let us have the intention of performing them as if for our Lord Himself, for such is His wish, and He will reward us for it all in heaven.

Virtue.

298. Who is virtuous?

He is virtuous who is always striving and ready to do what is pleasing to God.

The contrary: vicious.

There is a great difference between natural virtue and supernatural virtue. Pagans and worldly-minded people may possess natural virtue, be naturally good, for instance, be patient, be liberal towards the poor; but their virtue is either only a natural disposition, or is practised merely to please

themselves or for the purpose of drawing on themselves the praise of men. But this virtue does not deserve reward in heaven, because it is not practised to please God. On the other hand, supernatural virtue is deserving of heavenly reward, because it is practised in order to please God. Here there is question only of supernatural virtue. To be supernaturally virtuous, we must not only have the will to please God, not only be always ready to do what is pleasing to God, but we must always strive, we must always exert ourselves to do what is pleasing to God.

299. Which are the three divine virtues?

The three divine virtues are: faith, hope and charity.

300. Why are faith, hope and charity called divine virtues?

Faith, hope and charity are called divine virtues because they directly relate to God.

We believe *in God*, we hope *in God*, and we love *God*. — They are infused into our souls at baptism.

The divine, called also theological, virtues are the greatest of virtues. They relate to God; that is, they have God as their object. Just as, for instance, the love of the neighbor has the neighbor for its object, so the love of God has God for its object, for by the former we love our neighbor, and by the latter we love God. When we exercise faith and hope, we think of God. Another reason why these virtues are called divine, is because they come from God. He places them in our soul when we are baptized. Just as only he who has a natural disposition or talent to become an artist, e. g., a sculptor, can become such, so, in like manner, we could not of ourselves practise faith, hope and charity,

but these virtues must be previously given to us by God. But He does not give them to us in all their perfection, but wishes us to increase and perfect them by practising them, by often making acts of these virtues.

301. How may we briefly make an act of faith, hope and charity?

We make an act of faith, hope and charity, by briefly saying:

O my God, I believe all Thou hast said, because Thou art the infallible truth.

O my God, I hope for all Thou hast promised, because Thou art faithful.

O my God, I love Thee with all my heart, because Thou hast loved me first, and hast given me countless benefits.

We may also make the longer acts in the catechism, p. 104. We may say these acts merely in our mind; but if we pronounce them with our lips, we may each time gain an indulgence of seven years and seven times forty days. It would be well if we were to recite these acts every morning and every evening.

302. Which are the seven principal virtues?

The seven principal virtues are:

1) humility,
2) liberality,
3) chastity,
4) brotherly love,
5) temperance in eating and drinking,
6) meekness,
7) diligence.

The contrary vices: pride, covetousness, lust, envy, gluttony, anger, sloth.

1. There are many other virtues besides the divine virtues. Humility is the foundation of them all. It is the opposite of pride. He that is humble does not think much of himself, or prefer himself to others, but he gives glory to God for anything good that is in him, and acknowledges his own helplessness, weakness and sinfulness. Like the publican, he begs God for mercy, because he is a sinner. God gives His grace to the humble, and takes pleasure in exalting them.

2. The opposite of the miser is he who freely gives to the needy and to the church and to all good works, according to his means. He does this because He knows that God has given him his goods, that he may make a good use of them. He who does this lays up treasures in heaven, which will make him rich and happy for all eternity. A poor man was shipwrecked and cast on the shore of an island. The people came and made him their king and gave him a fine palace and plenty of riches. The poor man wondered why he should be treated in that grand way, and asked an old man to explain it to him. The old man said: "This is only for a time, for the real king will come one day and put you out on a desert island as poor as you were when you were cast ashore." "What should I do?" "Send all you want of your abundance to that desert island, so that when you are put there you may have all you need to live comfortably." He took this advice, and when he was cast away he had everything in abundance. (Make the obvious application.)

3. Chastity. (See explanation of the sixth commandment.)

4. Brotherly love wishes well to our neighbor

and sympathizes with him in his trials, and is always ready to help him and to oblige him.

5. Temperance in eating and drinking. (See explanation of the fifth commandment and of the vice of gluttony.)

6. Meekness, the opposite of anger. He is meek, who is calm and friendly when abused, or even insulted. St. Francis de Sales was a model of meekness. He once said to a man who reviled and abused him: "My dear friend, if you were to tear out one of my eyes, I would still look at you with the other in a friendly manner."

7. Diligence, the opposite of sloth. He is diligent who strives to make a good use of his time, in order to increase his merits by doing all the good he can. St. Stanislaus was only eighteen years old when he died, but he was so diligent that he became a great saint in a short time.

303. Which are the evangelical counsels?

The evangelical counsels are:

1) voluntary poverty,
2) perpetual chastity,
3) entire obedience to a spiritual superior.

Counsel = what is not *commanded.* They are called *evangelical,* because they are mentioned by the Evangelists. He who observes the commandments, will obtain Heaven; he who observes the counsels will obtain a higher place in Heaven.

"*If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. If thou wilt be perfect, go, sell what thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven*" (Matt. 19, 17, 21).

You are bound to do what is commanded, but not what is only counseled or advised. For instance, the teacher tells you to write a composition. This is a command. The teacher tells you that you

may write it with a pencil, or with pen and ink, but counsels you to write it with pen and ink. If you write it with a pencil, you fulfil the command; if you write with pen and ink, you fulfil both command and counsel. No one can go to heaven without keeping the commandments. He who observes the counsels also, will go up higher in heaven, because he does more than those who do not.—One day a young man asked our Lord what he should do to gain heaven. Our Lord replied that he should keep the commandments. The young man answered that he had kept them all from his youth. Our Lord then said to him: "If thou wilt be perfect, go, sell what thou hast and give to the poor, and come follow Me." Our Lord did not command him to do this, but advised him, and, at the same time, told him that to do so would make him perfect and deserving of a greater reward.

1. Voluntary poverty is a poverty a person willingly takes upon himself, just as our Lord, to whom the world and all its riches belonged, wilfully gave them up and was born in a poor stable, and led a life of poverty. Jesus gave the example, and in the Church hundreds of thousands have followed His example and have become poor and have led a poor life for His sake.

2. Jesus gave men an example of perfect chastity, and in the Church numberless persons of both sexes have renounced marriage and led a life of chastity for the love of Jesus.

3. Jesus Christ gave the example of perfect obedience, giving up His own will not only to His heavenly Father, but also to all those who had received authority over Him from God, such as Mary, Joseph, the civil government, Pilate, etc. To imitate the obedience of Jesus Christ, numberless

multitudes of persons have given up their own will, and submitted it to their spiritual superiors. This obedience is only counseled; whilst the obedience to lawful superiors, such as that of children to their parents, of Christians to the Church in all things spiritual, and to the government in all civil affairs, is obligatory on all, and necessary for salvation.

304. Who are obliged to observe the evangelical counsels?

All those are obliged to observe the evangelical counsels who have bound themselves by a vow to do so.

The three *religious vows.* — *Religious:* Monks, Friars, Brothers; Nuns, Sisters. — Monasteries, Convents.

You see this book. It is mine, and I may keep it as long as I will. But if I give it away, it is no longer mine, and I may not take it back, for it belongs to someone else. In like manner, a person is free to own property, to get married, to keep his own will; but if he makes a vow of voluntary poverty, perpetual chastity and obedience to a spiritual superior, he is bound to keep the evangelical counsels, because he is no longer his own master, but has given up his liberty to God. Those who make these vows are usually called religious, and they live together, that is, in community, and follow a rule which explains how they are to keep their vows, and produces uniformity of conduct in the members. Religious do not personally own anything as their own, but all they have belongs to the order, and they must have permission for all they use. They have renounced marriage, but have Jesus Christ as their spouse. They have no will of their own, but have to keep their rules faithfully and obey their superiors as holding the place of

God. By the vow of obedience they give to God not only the fruits of the tree (the acts of their will), but also the tree itself (their own will), and can gain a two-fold merit by all that they do. St. Anthony founded the first religious order († 356); St. Benedict († 543) founded the Benedictines; St. Francis of Assisi († 1226), the Franciscans; St. Dominic († 1221), the Dominicans; St. Ignatius († 1556), the Jesuits; St. Vincent de Paul († 1660), the Lazarists; St. Alphonsus († 1787), the Redemptorists.

Male religious are sometimes called monks; male religious who are not priests are called brothers. Female religious are called nuns or sisters. Some religious preach the Gospel, give missions; others teach, others care for the poor, the orphans, the sick; others spend their life in prayer, in work, in doing penance.

Not everyone should become a religious. For this there is required a vocation, a calling by God to the religious state; in other words, a religious vocation. When God gives one such a vocation, He gives him a great longing for the religious life, for the order He wishes him to enter; and besides, He gives him all the dispositions necessary to fit him for the religious life. It belongs to the confessor to decide about one's vocation. When the confessor decides that a person has a religious vocation, and that person, after applying to the superiors of the order, is admitted, that person has to go through a novitiate of one or two years, to try the religious life and to see whether he is fit for it. At the end of the novitiate, if he is willing to be a faithful religious all his life, and if the superiors consider him fit for the order, he makes his profession, that is, he makes the vows of voluntary poverty, chastity and obedience. When he begins

his novitiate, he is invested with the habit of the order.

305. Which are the eight beatitudes?

The eight beatitudes are:

1) Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven.

2) Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the land.

3) Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.

4) Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after justice, for they shall be filled.

5) Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

6) Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God.

7) Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called the children of God.

8) Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice's sake, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven (Matt. 5, 3-10).

The principal virtues men should practise are contained in the eight beatitudes. They are called beatitudes because our Lord declares blessed and deserving of heavenly reward those who practise them.

1. Our Lord does not declare blessed those who are merely poor, but only the poor in spirit. To these belong those poor who bear their poverty for the love of God, those who give up all their possessions to lead a life of poverty in the service of

God, and also all the rich who are not attached to their riches, but are generous and charitable towards the needy and God's holy Church. Also the truly humble who refer all the good they have and do to God.

2. The meek are those who are kind and patient towards those who injure them.

3. Those who mourn and grieve for their sins will be consoled by obtaining pardon.

4. Those who have a great yearning to become holy and go to heaven, shall realize what they long for.

5. The merciful here meant are those who perform works of corporal and spiritual mercy.

6. The pure of heart are the chaste in body and soul.

7. The peace-makers are those who avoid all disputes, and try to prevent or appease quarrels, and would rather suffer an injury than enter into a quarrel.

8. Those who, like the martyrs and the good, suffer without any fault on their part, contempt, insults, persecution and other trials, for the love of God, are declared blessed by our Lord. Among these are they who keep Sunday holy, observe the days of abstinence, and go regularly to confession in spite of the ridicule cast upon them by the world.

306. What must we do to lead a devout life?

To lead a devout life we must

1) pray diligently,
2) love to hear the word of God,
3) often receive the sacraments,
4) honor the Blessed Virgin,
5) deny ourselves, even in lawful things,
6) often make a good intention.

A further means to lead a devout life is, to join sodalities and confraternities.

1. When we pray, we converse with God. By praying we honor Him and please Him, and we can obtain all we need to save our soul. Of ourselves we can do nothing for our salvation; for this we need the grace of God. To obtain grace, we must pray to God for it, and He will give it to us. Therefore, prayer is absolutely necessary for us. As we cannot learn unless we study diligently, so also we cannot obtain grace, unless we pray to God diligently for it.

2. The word of God is all that God has revealed to us. It is made known and explained to us in sermons and instructions. Those who neglect to hear sermons and instructions, soon forget their catechism and become careless in their religious duties.

3. The sacraments we should often receive are the sacraments of penance and the Holy Eucharist. The sacrament of penance purifies and cleanses our soul, and the Holy Eucharist is the strengthening food of the soul. He who is in mortal sin is not pleasing to God, for his soul is very filthy. Just as we must often wash ourselves to keep clean, and often eat to keep up our life and strength, so we should often wash our soul in confession to keep it clean, and often receive holy Communion to keep up the life and strength of our soul.

4. Our Lord loves His Mother Mary more than He loves all the angels and saints, and is greatly pleased to see us love and honor her. Mary will obtain for us every grace, for our Lord will never deny her what she asks for her children, for those who pray to her. Let us be her loving children, and she will help us to live and die well.

5. (Self-denial and mortification explained in question 294). Deny yourselves first in what is unlawful; for instance, do not steal an apple to eat it, do not eat meat on Friday, however much you would like to eat it; overcome yourselves in such things and avoid sin. Deny yourself also sometimes in lawful things; for instance, you have a chance to eat something you like, deny yourself and do not take any, or do not ask for it a second time. You are thirsty and would like to drink; deny yourself, and wait till meal-time for a drink. You would like to gratify your curiosity and see what is going on in the street; deny yourself and do not go to see. If you at times deny yourself in lawful things, you will find it easier to avoid what is unlawful.

6. Make a good intention in the morning for the whole day, as you have been told before.—It promotes greatly, that is, it benefits and helps along very much your salvation if you join some pious confraternity or sodality, and keep its rules faithfully, attend its meetings, the processions and other exercises. The members edify and encourage each other by their prayers, by receiving the sacraments in a body, and other good works.

Application. He who leads a devout life will have peace of mind, a happy death and will obtain Heaven.

God rewards him who leads a good life by a holy peace and contentment during life, even in the midst of sufferings and trials. And a good and holy death awaits him, and the joys of heaven will be his lot for all eternity.

Grace.

307. What do we need to lead a devout life?

To lead a devout life, we need the grace of God.

Grace is absolutely necessary for our salvation. To be saved we must, first, believe all that God has revealed. "Without faith it is impossible to please God." But to have faith, we need divine grace. In the second place, to be saved we must keep the commandments; but without the grace of God we cannot keep them.

308. What is grace?

Grace is a heavenly gift, which God confers upon our soul for our salvation.

Jesus Christ deserved grace for us by His passion and death. The Holy Ghost distributes grace to us, confers it on us. By mortal sin we lose sanctifying grace. By our good works we increase grace in us.

Grace is a gift given us by God Himself. The Blessed Virgin and the saints cannot give it to us, but they may obtain it for us by their intercession. It is a gift of God to our soul, and not to our body as our daily bread is. It is given to us, not for our natural life, or our natural welfare, but for our supernatural welfare, for our eternal salvation, to enable us to gain heaven. (Impress clearly and deeply on the minds of the children that grace is supernatural, given us for our spiritual life, for our salvation, and not for our body or its wants, or for a mere temporal object.) Since grace is a gift of God, He is free to give more and greater graces to some than to others. But He gives to each man all the graces really necessary for salvation. His

graces are of two kinds—actual grace and sanctifying grace.

309. What is actual grace?

Actual grace is that grace which we need for every good work.

Grace of assistance, transient grace.

It enlightens our understanding and inclines our will to do good and aids us to accomplish it. To resist temptation is also a good work.

"*Without Me you can do nothing*" (John 15, 5). "*It is God who worketh in you both to will and to accomplish, according to His good will*" (Phil. 2, 13). "*I can do all things in Him who strengtheneth me*" (Phil. 4, 13).

Actual grace does not dwell in the soul, for God gives it to us only to help us to do some good work. Actual grace enlightens our mind, that we may see our duty or the good work we have the opportunity to perform. It moves our will to perform, and it actually helps us in performing it. For instance, a man passes by a church early in the morning. The thought strikes him that, as he has time to spare, he might as well go in and hear a Mass before going to his work. This is actual grace, inspiring the thought and moving his will to follow the inspiration. He obeys the inspiration and goes in and hears a Mass. Actual grace assists him in following the inspiration. Another instance. A boy on his way to school sees in a garden a fine apple tree full of juicy apples, and feels tempted to climb over the fence and steal some. But the thought strikes him: That is wrong; it is a sin to steal. This is actual grace enlightening him. But the temptation is strong. He reflects, however, and at last says: "No; I will not steal." This is actual grace moving and strengthening him to overcome the temptation. (Comparison of grace with

a mother teaching and helping her little child to walk.)

We can do nothing for our own salvation, that is, we can perform no good work without God's actual grace. (See John 15, 5; also, Phil. 2, 13.) But with God's grace we are able to perform what is most difficult, and even what is impossible for human nature.

Whenever we do anything good, we should not be proud of it, but should remember that we could not have done it without the grace of God. In like manner, when we hear of someone doing something very wicked, we should never say: "Oh! I would never be guilty of such a wicked thing," for without the grace of God we are capable of committing even the most horrid crimes.

God gives sufficient grace to all men. To the good He gives the grace to remain good, to overcome temptation, and to perform good works. To the wicked He gives grace to be converted. To the pagans and unbelievers He gives grace to find out the truth, and their conscience, to know and do what is right. If they are faithful to their conscience, God would rather send them an angel to teach them than allow them to perish for all eternity.

310. How do we particularly obtain actual grace?

We particularly obtain actual grace by the sacraments and prayer.

Grace is not effectual for our salvation if we do not *co-operate* with it. *"We exhort you that you receive not the grace of God in vain"* (II. Cor. 6, 1).

God gives us freely some actual graces; others He gives us when we pray for them, and others still He imparts to us through the sacraments. We can-

not always receive the sacraments, but we can always pray. Therefore we can always obtain the graces we need.

But grace does not do everything for us; it will not carry us to heaven in a balloon or a hand-basket. Grace is only a help to enable us to perform what we cannot do of ourselves. We are obliged to co-operate, that is, work along with grace. We must first do all that we can, and grace will then help us to do the rest, to accomplish what we cannot do alone. If we do not work along with grace, grace will be useless to us. (Quote 2 Cor. 6, 1.) Examples of good and bad thief; of Saul going to Damascus; Judas, etc.

311. What is sanctifying grace?

Sanctifying grace is that grace which makes us holy and children of God.

Sanctifying grace is the supernatural, heavenly life of the soul; the nuptial garment without which no one can be admitted to the heavenly banquet.

Sanctifying grace dwells in the soul. The soul has its own natural life, by which it is immortal, but of itself has no right to heaven, nor can it do anything for gaining heaven. When sanctifying grace is given to the soul, is infused into it, the soul receives a new and grander life, a supernatural life, which makes her holy and enables her to live for heaven, and makes her a child of God Himself, and gives her a right to heaven.

312. How do we obtain sanctifying grace?

We obtain sanctifying grace by the Sacrament of Baptism.

313. How do we lose sanctifying grace?

We lose sanctifying grace by mortal sin.

314. How do we regain sanctifying grace?

We regain sanctifying grace by the Sacrament of Penance.

God gave us sanctifying grace, without any merit on our part, when we were baptized. If we have ever committed a mortal sin, we have lost it. If we are now in mortal sin, we should as soon as possible go and make a good confession, and we shall recover sanctifying grace.

Application. Sanctifying grace is our most precious treasure, of greater value than money, health and life. To obtain this grace for us our Lord died on the Cross. Only he who dies in the possession of sanctifying grace can enter into Heaven. The more sanctifying grace we possess, the greater will be our happiness in Heaven.

All the treasures in the world cannot purchase sanctifying grace; it is more precious and more necessary to us than our health, than our life, for without it we can never enter heaven, or enjoy any happiness for all eternity. When we die, we cannot take any money with us; but if we have sanctifying grace, we shall be forever happy in heaven; and the more we possess of it, the more happy we shall be. Rather than lose sanctifying grace, we should suffer every torment, and even death itself, as the martyrs did. Let us daily try to increase it by multiplying our good works.—Let us consider it a most precious gem given us by God, which the world, the devil and our passions try to take away from us. Let us every morning pray to God to help us to preserve it until death.

PART III.

We must receive the Sacraments.

315. What is a Sacrament?

A Sacrament is a visible sign which imparts to us invisible grace.

The *visible* (outward) sign *indicates* the invisible (inward) grace. The pouring on of water at Baptism denotes and *effects* the cleansing of the soul.

The word sacrament is a Latin word signifying something holy or mysterious. A sign is something that indicates another thing; for instance, the ringing of the church bell indicates that divine service will soon begin. A sacrament is a visible sign, a sign that can be perceived by our senses; for instance, we can see the priest pouring water on the head of a child and hear him pronouncing the words of baptism. In other things the sign merely indicates what it means; but in the sacraments the sign produces what it indicates; for instance, weeping is a sign of grief, but does not produce grief, for it is produced by grief; but, for example, the pouring of the water and the pronouncing of the words in baptism not merely indicate, but actually produce the invisible graces of baptism; i. e., they both denote and effect the cleansing of the soul from all sin.

Two of the sacraments—baptism and penance—confer sanctifying grace; the former imparts it to those who never before possessed it, and the latter to those who have lost it. The other five sacraments increase sanctifying grace. The former two are

called sacraments of the dead, that is, of those in mortal sin, and the latter, sacraments of the living, because only those in the state of grace may receive them. Each sacrament imparts special graces to the recipients.—Penance is a sacrament of the living for those who have only venial sins to confess, whilst extreme unction may be a sacrament of the dead, for the dying who are in mortal sin and are unable to confess, though sorry for their sins, for then it remits mortal sin.

Our divine Saviour instituted the sacraments, those exterior means of grace, in order that we might have a moral certainty of obtaining the graces we need. Otherwise we could never be certain, v. g., of having our sins forgiven. When we, therefore, do our best to receive the sacraments properly, we are morally certain of receiving the graces they impart.

316. Who instituted the Sacraments?

Jesus Christ instituted the Sacraments.

The *ceremonies* were instituted by the Church for greater solemnity and edification. The Sacraments are *valid* without the ceremonies, but not without the visible sign.

Jesus Christ, being the Author of grace, can alone give grace, and prescribe the conditions for imparting and receiving it. In business no one can make good notes or write good checks, unless he has the means to pay them. Jesus instituted the sacraments to impart special graces. The Church has not the power to institute sacraments, but has the power to institute ceremonies and prayers in the administration of the sacraments. These may and even should be omitted in case of necessity, for instance, when a person is dying, and there is no time to perform them; but the visible sign insti-

tuted by Christ can never be omitted or changed without rendering the sacrament invalid, that is, of no value, no real sacrament.

The Church instituted ceremonies to teach us more clearly the meaning and effects of the sacraments, to inspire us with reverence for them, and to induce us to prepare well for their reception, and to receive them with fervor. The sacraments are good and effective in themselves, and depend not on the holiness of the priest who administers them. They are like a good coin, having the same value, no matter who gives it to us.

317. Which are the seven Sacraments?

The seven Sacraments are:

1) Baptism,
2) Confirmation,
3) Holy Eucharist,
4) Penance,
5) Extreme Unction,
6) Holy Orders,
7) Matrimony.

Jesus Christ instituted seven sacraments, and these seven have been in the Church from the beginning, and shall remain in it until the end. Seven is a mystical number. There are seven gifts of the Holy Ghost, seven principal virtues, seven works of corporal and of spiritual mercy, seven petitions in the Our Father.

The sacraments, seven in number, correspond with man's nature and satisfy all his spiritual wants. By baptism a man is born for heaven, by confirmation he is spiritually strengthened, by the Holy Eucharist he is spiritually nourished, by penance he is spiritually cured of sin, the disease of the soul,

by extreme unction he is prepared to die and go to heaven. Holy Order gives us priests to administer the sacraments, and matrimony gives grace to parents to bring up their children for heaven.

318. What Sacraments can be received only once?

The Sacraments that can be received *only once* are Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Orders.

They imprint a character on the soul which remains forever; *an indelible* mark.

A person may by sin lose the graces of these sacraments, but never their character or mark, for this remains forever in their soul, and can never be effaced. The sacraments of the Holy Eucharist and Penance may be received as often as we wish, even every day. Extreme unction may be received only once during sickness, while the same danger of death continues. Matrimony may be received again after the death of the former husband or wife.

319. How must we receive the Sacraments?

We must receive the Sacraments worthily.

With the proper preparation — otherwise a sacrilege.

He who *knowingly* and *wilfully* receives a sacrament of the living in the state of mortal sin, commits a sacrilege. Moreover it is a sacrilege to receive the sacrament of penance without sincere contrition or purpose of amendment, or without properly confessing the mortal sins we remember having committed since our last good confession; also for an adult to receive baptism without sincere sorrow for his actual mortal sins.

320. Which is the greatest Sacrament?

The Holy Eucharist is the greatest Sacrament.

Jesus Christ Himself.

321. Which is the most necessary Sacrament?

Baptism is the most necessary Sacrament.

Application. The Sacraments are holy and make us holy. Do not profane them; beware, especially, of the fearful crime of receiving them unworthily.

We should greatly revere them and assist at them, when administered, with great respect and veneration. The better we prepare to receive them, the greater the graces they bestow upon us.

1. Baptism.

322. Why is Baptism the most necessary Sacrament?

Baptism is the most necessary Sacrament

1) because without Baptism no one can be saved,

2) because without Baptism no other Sacrament can be received.

"Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3, 5).

1. These words of our Lord show the necessity of baptism, for we must be born again, that is, spiritually, before we can go to heaven. Though our Lord does not here mention the word baptism, He clearly indicates it by mentioning water as the visible sign, and the Holy Ghost, that is, His grace, as that which sanctifies the baptized person. He, moreover, commanded His apostles to preach the Gospel to all men and to baptize them. Baptism is necessary, because it alone takes away original sin. Regarding the fate of those children that die without baptism, the Church has made no decision. As they have not committed any actual sin, they do not go to hell, nor endure torment. They probably enjoy some natural happiness although they are not

in heaven. Hence parents should have their children baptized as soon as possible after their birth. (Society of the Holy Childhood for the baptism, etc., of pagan children.)

2. Baptism is the door by which we enter the Church; the other sacraments are for those only who are already members of the Church. He who is not yet baptized cannot receive any of them, even if all their ceremonies, etc., were performed over him.

323. How is Baptism administered?

Baptism is administered by pouring water on the head of the person to be baptized, and at the same time pronouncing the words: 'I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

Any *natural* water. Enough to touch, and flow from the skin.

"Going therefore, teach ye all nations: baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matt. 28, 19).

Any natural water may be validly used for baptism, v. g., water from the sea, river, a creek, a spring, rain water, water from snow or dew, but not artificial waters, v. g., rose water, cologne water. The priest when solemnly baptizing must use baptismal water, that is, water specially blessed for baptizing.

Our Lord prescribed water for the baptism, because, being used for washing and cleansing, it denotes the washing and cleansing of the soul by baptism, and also because water being so plentiful, can be easily procured.

In baptizing the water must touch and flow upon the skin of the person baptized. The priest pours

it three times on the person's head in the form of a cross.

2. He who baptizes must pronounce the prescribed words whilst he is pouring the water on the person's head, and should intend thereby to baptize, that is, to do what Christ and the Church prescribe. All children should know well how to baptize, for they may have to do so in case of necessity when a priest cannot be had.

321. What takes place in the soul of the person baptized?

The soul of the person baptized is cleansed from all sin and sanctified by the grace of God.

Definition: Baptism is that Sacrament by which we are cleansed from all sin and sanctified by the grace of God.

Effects of Baptism. *It takes away:* 1) original sin, 2) all sins committed before Baptism, 3) the eternal punishment, 4) all temporal punishment. *It gives:* 1) sanctifying grace, 2) it makes us children of God, 3) heirs of Heaven, 4) members of the Catholic Church, 5) it infuses into the soul the divine virtues, 6) it imprints an indelible mark on the soul.

1. Baptism cleanses the soul more perfectly than the sacrament of penance, for besides effacing all sin, both original and actual, it takes away both the eternal and the temporal punishment due to sin, so that he who would die immediately after baptism, would go straight to heaven.

2. Baptism confers sanctifying grace, rendering the soul not only pure, but exceedingly fair and beautiful, and endowing it with a heavenly, supernatural life. It raises us to the dignity of children of God, and gives us the right to call God our Father and to be His heirs, and to share His happiness in heaven. At Christ's baptism the Holy Ghost came down from heaven, and a voice from heaven said: "This is My beloved Son." In bap-

tism we also receive the sanctifying grace of the Holy Ghost, become children of God, and heaven is opened to us as our inheritance. Baptism makes us children of the Catholic Church. Whoever is validly baptized, no matter by whom or in what sect, is a member of the Catholic Church, and is bound by her commandments. Baptism infuses into the soul also the three divine or theological virtues, and impresses on it a mark by which that soul will be known forever as baptized.

325. Who can baptize validly?

Any one can baptize validly.

326. Who has the right to baptize?

The pastor has the right to baptize.

A lay person is permitted to baptize only in case of *necessity* i. e. when a person is in danger of dying without baptism, and no priest can be had. — Private Baptism.

Only in cases of necessity may lay people baptize, if no priest can be had before the unbaptized person dies. A Catholic should then baptize rather than one who is a non-Catholic; a man or a boy, rather than a woman or a girl, provided such a one can baptize properly. Children of non-Catholics, not in immediate danger of death, must not be baptized, unless their parents promise to bring them up in the Catholic religion. All over seven years of age, before they may be baptized, must be instructed in the principal mysteries of faith and in the nature, effects and obligations of baptism; moreover, if guilty of grievous sins, they must be sorry for them and resolve to commit them no more.

327. When should children be baptized?

Children should be baptized within one week after birth, if such is possible.

The reason is that little children are usually very delicate, and may easily get sick and die. Even in those climates, where it would be dangerous to take a newly born child to the church, baptism should not be deferred beyond one month.

328. What are the baptismal vows?

The baptismal vows are the promises made at Baptism: to renounce the devil and sin, and to preserve the faith.

To become a child of God and a Christian, one must first renounce the devil, that is, promise God never to serve the devil; secondly, the works of the devil, that is, sin; and finally, the pomps of the devil, that is, sinful pleasures and whatever comes from the devil. Then the one to be baptized must profess his faith in the Blessed Trinity and all the truths taught by Christ and His Church. As for children who cannot answer for themselves, all this is done for them by their sponsors or godparents. When they are grown up, it would be well for them to ratify and renew their baptismal vows on the anniversary of their baptism.

329. What must sponsors do?

Sponsors must at Baptism answer for the child, and, later, take care that it be brought up a Catholic.

At every baptism there should be at least one sponsor, and never more than two—a male and a female. They become godparents and are bound—where and when feasible—to bring up their godchild in the Catholic faith, if its parents fail to do so.

330. Who can be sponsor?

Only a practical Catholic can be sponsor.

Sponsors should see that the child be instructed in the Catholic faith. They become spiritually related to the person baptized and to his parents. A non-Catholic or one who is not a practical Catholic cannot help in bringing up a child as a true Catholic.

Your *patron* saint is the saint whose name was given you at Baptism. He is to protect you; pray to him for the preservation of the baptismal grace. Celebrate his feast annually; it should remind you of your Baptism.

Ceremonies. Before Baptism: blowing upon the face, exorcism, blessed salt, ephpheta, baptismal vows, profession of faith, anointing with holy oil. — *After Baptism:* anointing with chrism (Christian), placing a white linen cloth on the person baptized, and a lighted candle in his hand.

Solemn Baptism, with all the ceremonies (in the church), and *private Baptism.* He who has received private Baptism must afterwards be brought to the church for the ceremonies.

If any one cannot receive the Sacrament of Baptism, he can be saved by the *baptism of desire* (perfect love of God which includes the desire of the Sacrament), or he may be saved by the *baptism of blood* (martyrdom for Christ). These, however, are no Sacraments.

A practical Catholic is one (see qu. 131). Since the sponsors must answer for their godchildren and even, in case of necessity, bring them up in the faith, naturally none but practical Catholics are fit to be sponsors. Parents cannot be sponsors for their own children; nor can young children be sponsors. Sponsors absent from the baptism, may be represented by others, that is, by proxy, but they should be aware of their sponsorship and give their consent to it. The spiritual relationship contracted between the sponsors and the baptized person and his or her father or mother is an impediment to matrimony.

At baptism the name of a saint should be given to the person baptized, that he may have him for a protector, imitate his example, and thus gain heaven. We should celebrate the feast of our holy

patron and the anniversary of our baptism rather than our birthday. Why?

(To describe the ceremonies of baptism use the Ritual.)

If a person, who, when in danger of death, has received private baptism, whether from a priest or a lay person—recovers his health, all the ceremonies of baptism should be performed in church as soon as possible. Since baptism is absolutely necessary and yet can be received only once, converts to the Church, whose previous baptism is reasonably doubtful should be baptized conditionally. Conditional baptism is administered in the following manner: "If thou art not yet baptized, I baptize thee in the name," etc.

Application. All your life thank God for holy Baptism. If you had not been baptized, you would not be a child of God and could not be saved. Out of gratitude, help as far as you can, others to be baptized, especially pagan children, through the Association of the Holy Childhood.

A Parable.—A man died owing an immense debt to his sovereign. When that man's son was twelve years old, the King sent for him, and gave him two envelopes, one with a black border, and the other with a golden one, telling him to open first the envelope with a black border and read its contents. The boy read therein all that his father owed the King and all that the King had spent for the boy. The King said to him: "My son interceded for you and I have pardoned you all these debts, and give you instead all that is written in the golden envelope." The boy opened this envelope, and read therein that the King had adopted him as his son and made him his heir. (Apply to the sacrament of baptism.) We should daily thank God for the grace of baptism and show our gratitude by faithfully practising our religion and keep-

ing the commandments. By joining the Association of the Holy Childhood you can help to procure baptism for many little pagan children abandoned by their parents.

2. Confirmation.

331. Who administers Confirmation?

The bishop administers Confirmation.

In the Acts of the Apostles we read that when the deacon Philip had preached the Gospel in Samaria and converted and baptized many, the apostles Sts. Peter and John went there to impose hands on the converts, that they might receive the Holy Ghost. The bishop is the shepherd, or pastor, of his whole diocese, and he should know his people, and they also should know him. Therefore the bishop administers confirmation, and imparts to the faithful graces which priests cannot impart. The bishop alone has the right to administer this sacrament. In cases of necessity, for instance, in pagan countries, in times of persecution, the Pope sometimes empowers some priest to administer confirmation with chrism blessed by a bishop, for only a bishop can bless chrism.

332. How does the bishop administer Confirmation?

The bishop when administering Confirmation, places his hand on the head of the person to be confirmed and anoints the forehead with chrism, in the form of a cross, saying: "I sign thee with the sign of the cross, and I confirm thee with the chrism of salvation, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Amen.

Before doing this, the bishop extends his hands over *all* those who are to be confirmed and prays that the Holy

Ghost may descend upon them. — *After* Confirmation, the bishop gives the blessing to all. All those who were confirmed must be present at this blessing.

Chrism consists of olive oil and balsam, and is blessed by the bishop on Holy Thursday.

The imposition of hands, the anointing with chrism and the words pronounced by the bishop constitute the visible or outward sign of the sacrament. The apostles used to impose their hands on the duly baptized and these received the Holy Ghost, as we read in the Acts of the Apostles.

Chrism means an oil for anointing. It is made of olive oil—oil made from olives—and balsam—a sweet-scented gum that flows from cuts made in the bark of the balsam shrub. Chrism is blessed by the bishop on Holy Thursday, because on that day during our Lord's prayer and agony in the garden of olives, there flowed from His body a sweat of blood for the redemption of the world. Oil is a symbol of strength. In olden times, wrestlers, etc., were anointed with oil to give them strength. Oil is also burned in lamps to give light. In confirmation the Holy Ghost imparts light and strength for a good life. Balsam is sweet-scented and preserves from corruption. In like manner, he who is confirmed receives grace to keep out of sin and to give edification by the sweet odor of his virtues. The bishop makes the sign of the cross on the forehead of those whom he confirms, that they may practise their faith and never be ashamed of it.

When the bishop comes to a church to administer confirmation, he should be received in procession with the ringing of the church bells, etc. After confirmation the newly confirmed should recite together the Apostles' Creed and the Our Father.

333. What takes place in the soul of the person confirmed?

The soul of the person confirmed is filled with the Holy Ghost and strengthened by Him.

Confirmation signifies strengthening. Indelible mark.

Definition: Confirmation is that Sacrament, by which man is filled with the Holy Ghost, and strengthened by Him.

Already in baptism our soul becomes a temple of the Holy Ghost, for it is sanctified, but it is as yet like a church that is dedicated, but in which the Blessed Sacrament has not yet been placed. At confirmation the Holy Ghost comes into the soul and takes possession of it and dwells in it, increasing in it sanctifying grace, and strengthening it, and impressing upon it the indelible mark of confirmation, which will increase the soul's beauty in heaven, if it is saved, or its deformity in hell, if it is lost.

334. Why is the soul of the person confirmed strengthened?

The soul of the person confirmed is strengthened that he may bravely profess his faith and combat against the enemies of his salvation.

The seven gifts of the Holy Ghost: 1) wisdom, 2) understanding, 3) counsel, 4) fortitude, 5) knowledge, 6) piety, 7) fear of the Lord.

Neglecting to receive Confirmation through one's own fault, is sinful.

We need special strength to profess our faith in spite of human respect. Before receiving the Holy Ghost the apostles were weak and cowardly. In spite of their protestations, they had abandoned Jesus when he was betrayed and arrested, and, for fear of the Jews, they kept the doors of their house locked. But when they had received the Holy

Ghost, they were strengthened and courageously preached the Gospel, fearing neither threats nor dangers, nor prison, nor death itself. In like manner, those who are confirmed are strengthened to practise their religion in spite of ridicule and human respect. In confirmation we are strengthened that, like true soldiers of Jesus Christ, we may be able to combat and suffer, if need be, for our holy faith, since the devil, the world and our own passions seek to lead us astray.

The seven gifts of the Holy Ghost.—1) Wisdom enables us to realize that our soul and the heavenly goods are of infinitely greater value than the whole world and its goods and pleasures.—2) Understanding enables us to comprehend the teachings of our Lord preached in sermons and instructions, etc.—3) Counsel enables the young to find out their vocation, and directs all who are confirmed in the right performance of their duties.—4) Fortitude has just been explained.—5) Knowledge enables us to know well the truths of salvation, v. g., our final end.—6) Piety enables us to be devoted to God, to pray well.—7) The fear of the Lord is not like the fear of the slave who obeys only to escape the punishment he dreads, but is like that of a good child who loves his father, and therefore fears to displease him, to give him pain.

Although confirmation is not absolutely necessary for salvation, nevertheless it is so powerful a means of salvation, that it is for most of people highly dangerous wilfully to neglect receiving it. Those who are guilty of this neglect, practically expose themselves to the danger of losing their faith and forfeiting their salvation, and therefore can hardly be excused from grievous sin. Only those who are baptized can receive the sacrament of confirmation. In this country children are

usually confirmed about the time of their first holy Communion.

335. What should we do before Confirmation?

Before Confirmation we should

1) pray fervently to the Holy Ghost,

2) make a good confession.

Sponsors at Confirmation (like the sponsors at Baptism).

Persons over seven years of age who are to be confirmed, should be previously well instructed in the principal mysteries of holy faith and in all that pertains to the sacrament of confirmation. Like the apostles, who prepared themselves by a retreat of nine days to receive the Holy Ghost, we should have a great longing for the graces of this sacrament and prepare ourselves at least some time by daily prayers to the Holy Ghost, v. g., 7 Our Fathers and 7 Hail Marys in honor of His seven gifts. We should also have recourse to the Blessed Virgin, our holy patron and our guardian angel, that they might help us to receive the sacrament worthily. We should also previously make a good confession, for it would be a horrid sacrilege to receive confirmation in the state of sin. Although fasting is recommended, yet it is not necessary for confirmation. It is also prescribed to have sponsors at confirmation, who are practical Catholics; a male for males, and a female for females; they place their right hand on the right shoulder of their god-children during the anointing by the bishop. A spiritual relationship is contracted in confirmation just as in baptism. It is customary for those to be confirmed to take the name of some saint as their confirmation name.

Application. Have a great desire to receive worthily the Sacrament of Confirmation. If you have been confirmed, remember, that you have become, in a particular manner, a temple of the Holy Ghost. Beware of banishing the Holy Ghost from your heart by mortal sin.

Those who are confirmed are bound to lead a pure and edifying life, for not only their soul, but their bodies also, which have been anointed with holy chrism, have become temples of the Holy Ghost. The vice of impurity especially profanes the body that has become a temple of the Holy Ghost. Let us celebrate the anniversary of our confirmation by a firm resolution to live up to our faith, to be true to it in life and in death.

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3. The Holy Eucharist.

Address to the First Communicants' Class.

My dear children, when I awoke this morning I remembered that I was to begin today to give you instructions for your first holy Communion, and this thought filled me with joy. At my morning prayers, and especially during holy Mass, when our Lord lay as a Victim before me on the altar, I earnestly prayed thus: "Give me, O Lord, the grace so to give these instructions to our dear children, that I may thereby please Thee and benefit them. Inspire me that I may explain everything clearly, and give them the grace to pay good attention and understand everything well. Enable all my first communicants to prepare worthily for that most beautiful day of their life—the day of their first holy Communion."

I am not the only one that rejoices and prays; your good parents also rejoice and pray. There are, moreover, three others, who are much nearer

to God, who love you very much and protect and pray for you—the Blessed Virgin, the Mother of Jesus and our own spiritual Mother, your holy guardian angels and your holy patrons. They also rejoice because you will soon have the happiness to receive our dear Saviour into your hearts; they pray for you now especially that you are preparing for your first holy Communion. And you yourselves should pray to them to help you to make a worthy first holy Communion. And I will now tell you why I feel so happy today to begin the instructions for your first holy Communion. I rejoice both on account of Jesus Himself and on your own account.

At your first holy Communion Jesus Himself will come to you and enter into your hearts and dwell therein. It is my privilege to help to prepare your hearts, to render them pure and beautiful, so that they may be worthy and pleasant dwellings for our Lord. I rejoice also on your account because of the privilege I enjoy of preparing you for the most beautiful day of your life—the day of your first holy Communion. Were you to live till you are a hundred years old, and were you then asked whether you had many beautiful days in your life, you would surely answer: "Yes, I have had many beautiful days in my long life, but the most beautiful of all, the happiest of all was surely the day of my first holy Communion."

And why is that the most beautiful day in our life? It is because on that day we receive for the first time our dear Saviour into our hearts, Jesus, the friend of children, Jesus who became a child and died on the cross for us, Jesus, the Son of God, as truly God as the Father and the Holy Ghost, Jesus, the joy of the angels and saints in heaven for all eternity. On that day we possess

something heavenly in our hearts; that day is like a heavenly day on earth.

But to make that day a heavenly day for you, you must receive our dear Saviour worthily; to do this, you must from this day prepare yourselves for it as well as you possibly can. To do this, you must

First, know what the Blessed Eucharist is; you must be well instructed concerning it. Of course, you will every day learn your catechism lesson perfectly. Moreover, you must not miss attending any of the catechism classes without an urgent reason. You must pay strict attention to the instructions I will give. I would look upon it as a bad sign if any of you were wanting in attention.

In the next place, you must not only know and understand all about the Blessed Eucharist, you must above all prepare your heart to receive our Lord by keeping it pure and free from all sin.

Thirdly, you will soon have to go to confession as a means to make your heart pure and to keep from sin. Be sure in this confession to excite yourselves to contrition out of love for Jesus dying on the cross for us, and to confess sincerely all that your conscience reproaches you with, especially in what regards the sixth commandment.

Fourthly, from this day you should be more pious. Never neglect your prayers morning and night, or at meals, or at school, and say them always with attention and devotion. Try to hear Mass every day, and when you do so, ask our Lord earnestly to help you to prepare well for your first holy Communion. Make a daily visit in the church to our Lord for this intention, and say at least a part of the rosary.

Fifthly, shun carefully even the least sin. Especially strive to overcome any bad habit you may

have. Be very obedient and respectful towards your parents. Practise daily some act of self-denial in eating and drinking, or in playing. Do not be so boisterous and noisy. A first-communicant ought to be more recollected.

Finally, act so that everybody may see that you are preparing for some very holy act. You should behave so well as to cause every one that sees you to be sure that you belong to the first Communion class, and to be able to congratulate your parents on having such good and pious children.

It is with the greatest pleasure that I begin today the instructions on the most Blessed Sacrament. No other instruction pleases me more; I speak to grown people and to children on no other subject more willingly than on this grand subject, for nothing in the world can ever be dearer to me and to all of us than the most Blessed Sacrament. For this sacrament I became a priest. There would be no priest, if there were no Blessed Sacrament, and there would be no Blessed Sacrament, if there were no priest; for it pertains to the priest to prepare and distribute it, as I will explain to you later. —The Blessed Sacrament is for me what is dearest and holiest on earth, for it is the highest Good—God Himself. For it I would willingly give up everything, even my own life, because such a death would be holy indeed. You now see, dear children, why I take such delight in instructing you on the Blessed Eucharist.

And yet I am not without fear; but this fear is a holy fear. The most Blessed Sacrament is so holy and so full of holy mysteries. Human language is unable adequately to express what it is and what it contains. No, not even the angels in heaven can do so. It is a divine, incomprehensible and inexpressible mystery.

Suppose an angel would now come down here from heaven, and I would say to him: "Holy angel of God, please give, in my stead, an instruction on the Blessed Sacrament, for I am unable to do justice to so grand a subject." The angel, I am sure, would reply to me: "I cannot do it either; no, not even all the angels and saints in heaven are able to speak worthily on this great mystery. You are a priest and called by Christ to instruct the children. Have courage and fear not, Jesus will help you to explain it, and will also help the children to understand you." Therefore, I will now begin this instruction in the name of our divine Saviour. Pay great attention to every word I say, and allow no distracting thought or act to interfere with so holy a subject.

336. What is the Holy Eucharist?

The Holy Eucharist is the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ under the appearances of bread and wine.

Holy Eucharist = Blessed Sacrament. Corpus Christi = Body of Christ; Sacred Host = Divine Victim; Bread of Angels, Heavenly Manna, Lord's Supper. Viaticum = provision for a journey.

When the priest raises the host and the chalice at the elevation in holy Mass, the host appears to be only bread, and the chalice appears to contain only wine, but the host is not bread, but the true body of our Lord, and in the chalice there is not wine, but the true blood of Jesus Christ.

1. The Blessed Eucharist is called Blessed Sacrament, or Sacrament of the altar, because it is prepared on the altar, when the priest consecrates, that is, changes the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ; and also because it is kept in the tabernacle on the altar.

2. It is also called Corpus Christi, two Latin words that mean—Body of Christ. Also the Host, the sacred Host, that is, Victim, or Offering.

3. It is called Bread of Angels, because it is so holy, that those who receive it ought to be as pure as the angels in heaven.

4. It is called also heavenly Manna, because as the manna fed the Israelites through the desert till they reached the promised land, so the Blessed Eucharist should feed our soul till we reach heaven, the promised land for us.

5. It is called also the Lord's Supper, for it was at His last supper before His passion that Jesus instituted it.

6. When given to person in danger of death, it is called the Viaticum, that is, the food that is to strengthen them on their way from earth to heaven.

In the Blessed Eucharist the visible sign consists in the appearances of bread and wine, and the invisible grace is the true body and blood of our Lord under these appearances.

337. How is Jesus Christ present in the Holy Eucharist?

Jesus Christ is present in the Holy Eucharist as He is in Heaven, at the right hand of His Father.

With flesh and blood, body and soul, humanity and divinity.

The same body which was placed in the manger and was nailed to the Cross — but glorious and transfigured.

Presence of Christ: As God everywhere — as God and Man, in Heaven at the right hand of His Father, on earth, wherever the Blessed Sacrament is.

Really (not figuratively) — truly (not merely represented or imagined) — essentially (whatever belongs to the nature of a thing).

In the holy Eucharist Jesus Christ is present both as God and as man. The holy Eucharist is the body and blood of Christ; where His body and blood are there also is His soul, for His body and blood are living, and therefore united to His soul. Jesus Christ is then as man in the Blessed Eucharist; but as He is not a mere man, and as His person is divine, His human nature is united in the holy Eucharist with His divinity. Therefore in the Eucharist Jesus Christ is whole and entire—with His body and His blood, His soul and His divinity. His body is the same body that was laid in the manger, that died on the cross for us.—As man Jesus is in heaven, and also in every consecrated host in the world. He is there truly in His own real body, and that essentially, that is, He is there with all that makes Him a man,—body, blood and soul. How can this be? It is a mystery!

338. When did Jesus promise the Blessed Sacrament?

Jesus promised the Blessed Sacrament after the miracle of the loaves and fishes.

339. In what words did Jesus promise the Blessed Sacrament?

Jesus promised the Blessed Sacrament in these words: "The bread that I will give, is My flesh for the life of the world. Amen, amen I say unto you: Except you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, you shall not have life in you. For My flesh is meat indeed: and My blood is drink indeed" (John 6, 52. 54. 56).

(It would be well to take along the New Testament and read from it the whole of the sixth chapter of St. John, with a few words of comment on the miracle performed by our Lord. Call attention to the fact that the

Redeemer was expected to be like Moses, who led the Israelites for forty years through the desert, and during that time their chief food was the manna—a figure of the Blessed Eucharist. Therefore the Jews demanded of Jesus to feed them also as Moses had done to their forefathers. Jesus took occasion of this to tell them of the *spiritual* food He was going to give them to bring them through the desert of this life to heaven).

"The bread which I will give is My flesh for the life of the world." Bread here means food—as it does in the Our Father. The Jews who had witnessed the miracles of the loaves and fishes, instead of believing Jesus, who performed such great miracles, on hearing these words, said: "How can this man give us His flesh to eat?" Jesus confirmed what He had just said by these clear and strong words: "Amen, amen I say unto you," etc. (See text above.) From these words it is clear that our Lord actually promised to give to men His flesh to eat and His blood to drink, and that those who would fail to partake thereof, should have no chance of salvation. Most of His disciples refused to believe and left Him. Then Jesus turned to the apostles and asked them (see John 6). Let us believe and be faithful to Jesus as the apostles were.

340. When did Jesus institute the Blessed Sacrament?

Jesus instituted the Blessed Sacrament on the eve of His death.

Holy Thursday — (Feast of Corpus Christi).

What Jesus said after the miracle of the loaves and fishes was the first instruction ever given on holy Communion. One year later Jesus instituted the Blessed Sacrament, that is, on Holy Thursday, and gave the apostles their first holy Communion. On account of this the priest wears white vestments

at Mass on that day, although it is in Holy Week a time of penance and sorrow. But because the institution of so great a sacrament cannot then be worthily celebrated, the Church has appointed another day for this—the feast of Corpus Christi (Body of Christ), which falls on the Thursday following Trinity Sunday.

On Holy Thursday evening our Lord first celebrated the feast of the Passover by eating the paschal lamb with His apostles. This was in remembrance of the departure of the Israelites from Egypt, when the blood of the lamb marking the door-posts saved the first born of the Israelites from being killed by the Angel. In like manner, the blood of Jesus saved mankind from eternal death—that is, from damnation. Just as the paschal lamb was killed and its flesh eaten, so Jesus prefigured by it, was put to death, and He gives us His flesh to eat and His blood to drink in holy Communion. After eating the paschal lamb, Jesus washed the feet of His apostles, to show us how pure and clean in heart we must be to receive holy Communion worthily.

311. How did Jesus institute the Blessed Sacrament?

Jesus took bread, blessed it, broke it, and gave it to His disciples, saying: "Take ye, and eat: this is My body." He then took the chalice with wine, blessed it, and gave it to His disciples, saying: "Drink ye all of this: this is My blood. Do this for a commemoration of Me."

The bread our Lord used was unleavened bread, made of flour and water only, and flat and thin like our hosts—only larger; it could not be cut, but was broken to be eaten.

342. What took place when Jesus pronounced over the bread and wine the words: "This is My Body," "This is My Blood?"

When Jesus pronounced the words: "This is My Body" "This is My Blood," the bread was changed into His most sacred Body, and the wine into His most sacred Blood.

Consecration or transubstantiation = change of bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ.

God is almighty and does all that He wills. When He said at creation: "Let there be light," light was created. When He told the leper: "Be thou made clean," the leper was cleansed from his leprosy. When He said to Lazarus, dead already four days and his body corrupting: "Lazarus, come forth," Lazarus at once came out alive from the tomb. So when He said over the bread He held in His hands, "This is My body," the bread became His body, and ceased being bread, although it retained all the appearances of bread. When He said over the wine the words "This is My blood," there was in the chalice no longer any wine, but the true blood of Christ, although it had all the appearances of wine. (How at Cana Jesus changed water into wine. The rod of Moses changed into a serpent—a caterpillar changed into a butterfly—our food changed into our blood, flesh, etc.)

What a solemn and holy moment that was when our Lord instituted the Blessed Eucharist! It was on the eve of His death, when He wished to give to His disciples the greatest proof of His love—to leave them *all He had*, that is, Himself. Though He was to depart from their sight, He still wished to remain always with them, so great is His love for us all; hence He instituted the Blessed Sacrament, in which He dwells among us really and con-

stantly—though invisibly. When He instituted this Sacrament, He did it out of love, not only for His apostles, but also for you, children, who are preparing for your first holy Communion. So greatly does Jesus love the world, love us all!

343. What power did Jesus give His Apostles when He said: "Do this for a commemoration of Me?"

By the words: "Do this for a commemoration of Me," Jesus gave His Apostles the power to do what He had done, namely: to change bread and wine into His Body and Blood.

At the Last Supper, Jesus ordained His apostles priests, and gave them the power to do what He Himself had done—that is, He gave them the power to change bread and wine into His body and blood, for the words *"do this,"* clearly imply this power. Previously He had cured the sick, and also told His apostles to cure the sick, and they actually cured the sick. In like manner, we must believe that the apostles really received and exercised the power to change bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, and also to impart that power to others, as it was imparted to them.

344. Who received from the Apostles the power of changing bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ?

The bishops and priests received from the Apostles the power of changing bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ.

Our Lord promised life everlasting to those who would eat of this bread (that is, His flesh), and said that those who would not eat His flesh and drink His blood, should not have life (everlasting) in them. This was meant for all mankind till the end of the world. It was, then, His will that all

men should have the opportunity of receiving holy Communion. Therefore He empowered His apostles not only to change bread and wine into His body and blood, but also to communicate to others, that is, to bishops and priests, the power of doing likewise. For, according to St. Paul, Jesus said: "Do ye this in remembrance of Me till I come," that is, till the end of the world. Oh! what a grand and sublime power is thus given to priests, to call down Jesus from heaven on our altars, and to give Him in holy Communion to the faithful!

345. When do the bishops and priests change bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ?

The bishops and priests change bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ in the holy sacrifice of Mass.

You have all often assisted at Mass. The Mass consists of three principal parts—the Offertory, the Consecration and the Communion. It is at the Consecration that the priest changes the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, when, personating Christ, he says over them these words of Christ: "This is My body," "This is My blood." When this has been done, there is no longer bread and wine on the altar, but really and indeed the body and blood of Christ, together with His soul and His divinity. Therefore, the priest at once kneels down and adores our Lord, really present, and all the people kneeling and in silence likewise adore Him.

346. After the consecration, what is on the altar in the place of bread and wine?

After the consecration there is on the altar in the place of bread and wine the true Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.

The effect of the priest's words at the consecration is exactly the same as that of the same words Christ pronounced at the Last Supper over the bread and wine.

347. What remains of the bread and wine after consecration?

Only the appearances of the bread and wine remain after consecration.

348. What is meant by the appearances of bread and wine?

By the appearances of bread and wine is meant all that the senses perceive of bread and wine; as the form, color, taste, etc.

The sacred Host still looks like bread, but is no longer such. *Comparison:* Lot's wife changed into a pillar of salt — the form of a woman — but salt.

In all bodies or material objects we should consider two very different things. First, the exterior appearances of the objects, which may change, although the material thing itself does not change; for instance, a piece of bread may be round or square, etc., large or small, white or brown, salt or insipid, sweet or tasteless, and yet be real bread. Secondly, the substance of the object—that which makes it what it is in itself, and which does not change without changing the object itself. For instance, the substance of bread is what makes bread what it is, that is, what makes it to be bread; and though the exterior appearances may change, it does not itself change. If the substance is changed, the thing or body becomes something quite different; for instance, when our Lord at Cana changed water into wine. He changed the substance of water into the substance of the wine. We cannot perceive a substance by our senses. Ac-

cording to the usual law or course of nature, when one substance is changed into another, the exterior appearances also change, as was the case with the water our Lord changed into wine. Not only was the substance changed, but also the exterior appearances were changed, for it tasted and looked no longer like water, but was really wine and had all the taste, color and other appearances of wine. But almighty God, who made all things out of nothing, has the power to change one substance into another without changing appearances, and this He does in the Blessed Eucharist. The substance of bread is changed at the consecration into the substance of the body of Christ, and yet all the appearances of bread remain, although the bread no longer exists. In like manner, at the consecration the substance of wine is changed into the substance of the blood of Christ, and yet all the appearances of wine remain, although the wine is there no longer. This change is called transubstantiation, that is, the changing of one substance into another.

Jesus Christ wished to be present in the Blessed Sacrament under the appearances of bread to exercise our faith and render it more meritorious. "Blessed are those who do not see, and yet believe." Also, that we might come to Him with more confidence; for, if He appeared in His majesty, in the Blessed Sacrament, we should be afraid to approach Him. And finally that we might receive Him as food of our soul under the appearance of corporal food.

349. Under how many appearances is Jesus present?

Jesus is present under two appearances: under the appearance of bread and under the appearance of wine.

350. Is Jesus present whole and entire under each appearance?

Jesus is present whole and entire under each appearance.

Our Lord, in instituting the Blessed Eucharist, changed bread into His body and wine into His blood; he is, therefore, present under each of these two appearances. He is, moreover, whole and entire under each appearance, for our Lord changed bread into His living body, and His living body contains His blood and His soul, and is personally united to His divinity. In like manner He changed wine into His living blood, but to be living, His blood is necessarily united with His body and His soul and His divinity. From this it follows that, when we receive holy Communion under the appearance of bread only, we receive Jesus whole and entire. The same is true, if we were to receive holy Communion only under the appearance of wine. Christ instituted the holy Eucharist under two appearances, because it is also a perfect sacrifice, as we shall see later. The priest who receives holy Communion, when saying Mass, under the appearances of both bread and wine, does not receive any more than the laity who receive it under the appearance of bread only, for the laity as well as the priest receive Jesus Christ whole and entire.

351. Is Jesus present whole and entire in each particle of the appearances of bread and wine?

Jesus is present whole and entire in each particle of the appearance of bread, and each particle of the appearance of wine.

Just as a slice of bread, whether large or small, or even a crumb of bread, is as truly bread as a whole loaf, so also Jesus is whole and entire as

much in a small as in a large host, in a small piece of a host as in the whole host. If the host is divided, Jesus cannot be divided, for He is immortal and impassible, and is present whole and entire under each piece, however small, of the host. (Apply to a few drops, or a drop of the appearance of wine. Also a small piece of a broken mirror can reflect one's whole face as truly as the whole mirror.) This is the reason why, from the consecration till he has washed his fingers after the Communion, the priest holds the thumb and index finger of each hand joined together, lest, if after touching the sacred host, any little particle adheres to his fingers, it should fall to the ground and be trampled upon or lost, and thus the sacred body of Christ be profaned. How wonderful is the Blessed Eucharist!

352. How long does Jesus remain present in the Blessed Sacrament?

Jesus remains present in the Blessed Sacrament as long as the appearances exist.

The presence of Jesus Christ in the Blessed Sacrament begins with the consecration, and as long as the appearances of bread and wine remain, so long is He present. At Mass the priest consecrates a large host, which he receives at the Communion, and sometimes another large host and some smaller ones. The second large host is used for benediction. It is kept in the tabernacle until the time for benediction, and then it is put in a monstrance or ostensorium and placed on high so as to be seen and adored by the people, and after some hymns are sung, the priest takes in his hands the monstrance containing our Blessed Lord, and with it blesses the faithful present. The small hosts, which are for the holy Communion of the people, are kept

in the tabernacle. Hence Jesus Christ is truly and personally present in our churches, and a Catholic church is truly the house of God. For this reason so much money is spent in building and adorning beautiful churches, because they are God's own house and He lives in them. Pious people like to make donations of flowers, candles, candlesticks, altar-cloths, etc., for the decoration of the altar and the tabernacle, and of fine costly vestments, etc., for the priest to wear at Mass. In honor of our Lord's presence a lamp is kept burning day and night before the high altar where our Lord dwells. When the priest at Mass breaks the large host in three parts, he does not break our Lord's body, but under each part our Lord is whole and entire. In holy Communion our Lord remains truly present in those who receive Him as long as the appearances of bread remain unchanged. Therefore, those who receive holy Communion, should feel happy, for Jesus is for some time truly within them, and they should, then, not fail to make a good use of these precious moments to thank Him, and make known to Him their wants and their good resolutions.

353. What must we do because Jesus is present in the Blessed Sacrament?

Because Jesus is present in the Blessed Sacrament, we must adore the Blessed Sacrament.

Genuflect in passing before the tabernacle; on both knees, if the Blessed Sacrament is exposed.

Since the Blessed Sacrament is Jesus Christ Himself under the appearances of bread (and wine), and Jesus Christ, being God, must be adored, we must, therefore, adore the Blessed Sacrament, and should say: "Thou art truly my Lord and my God." If Jesus would come visibly into this room, we

should surely all get on our knees to adore and honor him; we should do the same if a priest were to bring the Sacred Host into this room, and why?

When we enter or leave the church, or pass before the tabernacle, we should reverently genuflect, bending the right knee to the ground. If our Lord is exposed in the monstrance, we should, in the above cases, genuflect on both knees. Always behave reverently in church, for our Lord is really present. Thousands of angels are there in humble and reverent adoration. Oh, if we could only see them! How willingly should we imitate them! How reverently you should behave when our Lord is brought as holy Communion or as Viaticum to some sick person in your house! Whenever you pass a church, the boys should lift their hats to our Lord therein, and the girls should bow and interiorly adore him! Some people turn several times a day towards the church, especially when tempted or sorely tried, and genuflect to our Lord therein, and mentally adore Him and recommend themselves to Him.

351. Why did Jesus institute the Blessed Sacrament?

Jesus instituted the Blessed Sacrament

1) that He might always remain with us also in His humanity,
2) that He might sacrifice Himself for us in holy Mass,
3) that we might receive Him as spiritual food in Holy Communion.

1. As God Jesus Christ is everywhere present, but not as man. But because He loves men so greatly, He wished to be near them and among them also as man, so that they might come to make

their wants known to Him, and also to testify their love for Him. Hence He instituted the Blessed Eucharist, from which He says to us: "Come to Me, all ye that labor and are heavily burdened, and I will refresh you."

2. He wished also to represent and apply the merits of His sacrifice on the cross by means of the holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

3. He wished not only to be near us, but to be united as closely with us as our food is united with us; hence He gives us Himself as the food of our soul in holy Communion.

Application. Frequently visit our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. This will please Jesus and bring you a rich reward. Love to go to church when the Blessed Sacrament is exposed and Benediction is given. If you pass a church salute your Redeemer, saying: Praised be Jesus without end in the Blessed Sacrament.

How easy it is for us to visit our Lord! We need not undertake long journeys, nor spend much time or money, nor undergo much fatigue or privation. Jesus is our best friend; let us often go to see Him and to speak with Him. He is the Lord of all things; to Him all things belong; let us go to Him in our wants, and He will grant us what we need, if we only pray for it as we should. You can gain so much merit; obtain strength and victory in temptation and perseverance. You, especially, who are preparing for your first holy Communion, often visit our Lord, and ask Him for His love, for the forgiveness of your sins, for the gift of prayer, and the grace of making a worthy first holy Communion. Go often to receive His blessing when benediction is given, and assist at the Corpus Christi procession, at the devotion of the Forty Hours.

The Holy Sacrifice of Mass.

355. What means: to offer sacrifice?

To offer sacrifice means: to offer God a visible gift whole and entire.

To offer sacrifice means much more than merely to offer a gift, to make a present. It means that what is offered is entirely destroyed to show the offerer's total dependence on and submission to the person to whom the sacrifice is offered. For instance, the Israelites were commanded to kill oxen, sheep, and even to burn them as a sacrifice to God. The offering of a thing to God is not a sacrifice, unless the object is destroyed or consumed.

356. Why do we offer sacrifice?

We offer sacrifice to adore God as the Lord of all things.

Sacrifice is the highest act of adoration of God. We honor and revere our parents in many ways; for instance, we offer them something nice on their birthday, on their feast day. We also make some offering to God to show our gratitude, our dependence on Him, to acknowledge Him as the sovereign Lord of all things. When the offering is wholly consumed or destroyed to honor God's supreme dominion over all things, it is a sacrifice. Hence the offering of sacrifice is the highest form of religious worship, and may be offered to God only. To offer sacrifice to a creature would be idolatry—a most grievous sin. We kneel down to adore God, and though we may kneel down to pray to the saints, or even to beg pardon of our parents, yet we are not, therefore, guilty of idolatry. But it is different as to the offering of sacrifice.

357. What is required for a sacrifice?

For a sacrifice is required

1) a visible gift,

2) a priest who offers it to God,

3) an altar on which it is offered.

At all times and in all places there have been sacrifices. The sacrifices of Cain and Abel, of Noah, of Abraham. The pagans also have sacrifices. In the old law, God prescribed in detail the sacrifices of clean animals. These were *figures* of the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross; therefore *imperfect sacrifices.*

1. A sacrifice must be visible, otherwise it cannot be consumed or destroyed.

2. It belongs to the priest to offer sacrifice, for God will not accept a sacrifice unless from those He has chosen. Where there is no priest, v. g., among Protestants and Mohamedans, there is no sacrifice. In the beginning of the world the father of the family was the priest, and was succeeded as such by the eldest son. Among the Israelites God chose a special family—that of Aaron, to be priests.

3. An altar—a holy place—is needed to offer sacrifice properly.

Sacrifices were offered to God from the beginning of the world, as we read in Scripture of the sacrifices of Cain and Abel, of Noah and Abraham. The pagans all over the world had their priests, their altars and their sacrifices. That proves that it is natural, that is, instilled by God Himself into man's heart, to offer sacrifice to God. Protestants and Mohammedans alone make an exception. In the Old Law God prescribed in detail the offering of sacrifices of oxen, sheep and other things, partly as a propitiation for sin, and partly as a means of honoring God. But these sacrifices had no virtue in themselves, but were pleasing to God only because they were figures and signs of our

Lord's sacrifice on the cross, and they derived all their virtue from our Lord, who is the "Lamb of God," that took away the sins of the world by dying on the cross. Hence they were but imperfect sacrifices.

358. Which is the perfect sacrifice?

The perfect sacrifice is the sacrifice on the Cross, in which Jesus Christ offered Himself to His heavenly Father.

The visible gift was Jesus Himself. He was also the priest. The Cross was the altar.

1. The sacrifice on the cross is the most perfect of all, because the victim offered was our Lord Jesus Christ Himself. All other sacrifices are of but little value in comparison with a single drop of the blood Jesus shed on the cross.

2. The sacrifice on the cross is the most perfect, because the priest, the offerer of this sacrifice, was Jesus Christ Himself. The least thing such a priest would offer in sacrifice would be of infinite value, on account of His infinite dignity as Son of God. How perfect, then, is the sacrifice in which He offered Himself!

3. This sacrifice of Himself our Lord offered on the cross—the holiest of altars, because sanctified by the blood of the Son of God. He sacrificed Himself thereon, of His free will, to His heavenly Father, to atone for our sins and obtain salvation for us. The tree of the cross was a tree of death for Jesus Christ, but it is a tree of life eternal for us.

359. Is the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross still offered?

The sacrifice of Christ on the Cross is still offered in every Mass.

It is nearly nineteen hundred years since the sacrifice on the cross took place. It put an end to the Old Law and its sacrifices, which were only its figures, and was the beginning of the New Law. But it was offered only once and in one place. Were then all sacrifices to cease? No; for sacrifice is the highest form of worship, and the Christian religion, being most perfect, since it is the work of God Himself, should be able to honor God in the most perfect manner. This it cannot do without sacrifice. Hence it should be able to offer to God the most perfect of sacrifices. But there can be no more perfect sacrifice than that on the cross. Hence God, in His infinite wisdom and by His infinite power, instituted in His Church a sacrifice which should be identical with that of Christ on the cross, and at the same time be capable of being everywhere offered daily until the end of the world; and this sacrifice is the holy Sacrifice of the Mass. In fact, at holy Mass there is offered to God the same body and the same blood that Christ offered on the cross. It is, then, the same sacrifice; it is a commemoration, a renewal, the application and the perpetuation of the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. Hence, whenever we hear Mass, we have the same happiness as the Blessed Virgin and St. John, who assisted at Christ's death on the cross.

360. How does Jesus offer Himself in the Mass?

In the Mass Jesus offers Himself for us to His heavenly Father in an unbloody manner.

On the Cross in a bloody manner.

On the cross Christ actually shed His blood and died. In the Mass this does not actually occur, but is only represented.

361. When did Jesus institute the holy sacrifice of the Mass?

Jesus instituted the holy sacrifice of the Mass at the Last Supper, and commanded His Apostles to offer it until the end of the world.

"Do this for a commemoration of Me."

At the Last Supper, Jesus instituted and said the first Mass. For He then offered His body and His blood in sacrifice for our salvation. When He changed bread into His body He said: "This is My body, which shall be delivered up for you," that is, offered for you. When changing the wine into His blood, He said: "This is the chalice of My blood, of the New Testament, which shall be shed for you and for many unto the remission of sins." Thus He showed that His body and blood were there present as a sacrifice. Just as the Old Testament was dedicated by the shedding and the sprinkling of blood, so the New Testament was dedicated by the shedding of Christ's blood and its being partaken of by the apostles—who then constituted the Church. At the Last Supper, Christ represented the sacrificial shedding of His blood on the cross by the separate consecration of the bread into His body and of the wine into His blood. The very words He used to consecrate them denote a sacrifice.

After He had done this He told His apostles: "Do this for a commemoration of Me." He then ordained them priests, with the power of offering the holy Sacrifice of the Mass, as He had just done. The apostles all said Mass, and ordained priests, conferring on them the same powers. There is kept in Rome the wooden altar on which St. Peter used to say Mass when he was in Rome. In the catacombs under Rome, where the Christians hid

themselves in times of persecution, there are many altars at which the Popes and priests used to say Mass.

362. Who is the invisible Priest in the Mass?

The invisible Priest in the Mass is Jesus Christ Who offers Himself by the hands of the visible priest.

Definition: Mass is that sacrifice in which Jesus Christ offers Himself to His heavenly Father by the hands of the priest in an unbloody manner.

Jesus Christ is really the Priest and Offerer at Mass, but He is visibly represented and personated by the priest. Hence in consecrating, the priest does not say: "This is Christ's body," but, because he personates Christ, he uses the very words of Christ: "This is My body," "This is My blood."

1. David had already prophesied that the Redeemer would be a priest, like Melchisedech, offering an unbloody sacrifice: "The Lord hath sworn . . . . . Thou art a priest forever, according to the order of Melchisedech." Melchisedech offered bread and wine to the Most high—a figure of the Blessed Eucharist, which must infinitely surpass the figure. Hence Jesus Christ offers forever, that is, until the end of the world, His body and blood under the appearances of bread and wine in holy Mass. Aaron, the high-priest of the Israelites, offered mostly bloody sacrifices. Our Lord is also a priest according to the order of Aaron, because He offered Himself in sacrifice in a bloody manner on the cross; but He did this only once.

2. The prophet Malachy foretold the end of the Jewish bloody sacrifices and their replacement by the unbloody sacrifices of the Mass all over the world: "From the rising of the sun, even to the going down, My name is great among the gentiles;

and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to My name a clean oblation" (Mal. 1, 11). Thus the prophet foretells that the sacrifice of the Mass, a clean, unbloody sacrifice, shall be offered on earth throughout the entire day; for at every hour, day and night, it is morning somewhere in the world, and Mass is being offered there.

The name Mass was given to this holy sacrifice, probably because at the end of it the people were dismissed from church by the deacon saying or singing: Ite Missa est—missa meaning dismissal of the assembly.

363. Which are the principal parts of the Mass?

The principal parts of the Mass are:

1) the Offertory,
2) the Consecration,
3) the Communion.

At the *Offertory* the priest offers bread and wine.

At the *Consecration* the priest changes bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ offers Himself.

At the *Communion* the priest receives the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.

They are called the principal parts, because they alone are necessary for the sacrifice, and may never be changed or omitted.

At the Offertory, after the priest has uncovered the chalice, he offers to God the bread or host, and, after putting wine with a little water into the chalice, he offers it also to God. In olden times, just before this offering, the people used to gather around the altar and offer, each according to his means, gifts for the support of the church, the clergy and the poor. Nowadays the ushers go through the church, collecting the offerings of the faithful.

2. The Consecration is the chief and most important part of the Mass, for it is then that the priest changes the bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus Christ, as our Lord did at the Last Supper. And Jesus, through His priest, offers Himself for us to His heavenly Father.

3. At the Communion, the priest receives the body and blood of Christ as the food of his soul, and administers the Sacred Host to all who then receive holy Communion. After the Communion, the body and blood of Christ are no longer on the altar, and the sacrifice is ended. (Explain when each of these principal parts begin.)

364. Who are especially benefited by the Mass?

Those especially benefited by the Mass are:

1) the priest who says Mass,

2) all who attend Mass with devotion,

3) those for whom it is especially offered.

General benefit: All the members of the Church Militant and Suffering participate in the benefits of every Mass.

Through the sacrifice of the Mass are remitted venial sins and temporal punishment due to sin, and there is imparted an increase of sanctifying grace, together with actual graces and merit for heaven, as well as help in trials and sufferings for both the living and the dead.

1. The priest saying Mass receives special graces, because he is nearest the source of grace, and our Lord, instituting the Blessed Eucharist, said that He shed His blood especially for priests—"for you."

2. All who *devoutly* assist at Mass, offer it in union with the priest, and the priest prays especially for them. The altar-boys, if devout, derive a special benefit, for they visibly represent the in-

visible angels ministering to our Lord. Hence they ought to be very good and pious, like the angels!

3. All for whom the Mass is said derive a special benefit from the Mass. When a person wants a Mass said, he gives an offering to the priest, not to pay for the Mass, for the Mass is above all price, and, besides, it would be a dreadful sin to wish to buy or sell for money anything holy, but for the priest's support.

Besides the special benefit of the Mass imparted to those I have just mentioned, there is also a general benefit from every Mass for all the faithful, both living and dead, for the Church both militant and suffering.

365. Why can we by means of the holy sacrifice obtain everything from God?

By means of the holy sacrifice we can obtain everything from God, because Jesus Christ offers Himself for us and prays with us and for us.

Some prayers are more powerful than others, for instance, the rosary, the way of the cross. But there is no prayer more powerful than those of holy Mass, because they are offered to God through Jesus Christ, who prays and offers Himself for us. He prays with us and for us, when, after the Consecration, we recite with the priest that best of prayers—the Our Father.

The priest may say Mass, first, for the living; i. e., for all Catholics, for the good, that they may persevere, for the wicked, that they may be converted, for the conversion of unbelievers, heretics, and even of the excommunicated. Second, for the dead, that is, for all who died as Catholics, but not for children who died either with or without baptism, nor for apostates, heretics, unbelievers or the

excommunicated. If the deceased for whom Mass is said, is already in heaven, or is a reprobate in hell, though the Mass cannot in either case benefit him, nevertheless the fruit of the Mass is not lost, for God will apply it to some suffering soul, in purgatory.

The priest may not say Mass for the saints in heaven, but he may offer it up in honor of the saints, or of some saint in particular. This means that Mass is offered up to thank God for all the graces and gifts He bestowed on them, and for all the graces we may have received through their intercession.

366. What are the ends for which Mass is offered?

The ends for which Mass is offered are:

1) to adore and praise God,
2) to thank Him for all benefits,
3) to obtain the remission of sins and of the temporal punishment due to them,
4) to obtain all that we need.

A sacrifice of praise, of thanksgiving, of propitiation, of petition.

The *ceremonies* are most ancient and have a profound meaning.

The *vestments* worn by the priest indicate that at the altar he takes the place of Jesus Christ and celebrates a sacred mystery.

The *Latin language* is 1) one, 2) holy, 3) catholic and 4) apostolic — therefore most appropriate for the holy sacrifice.

Children sometimes give a present to their parents, v. g., on their birthday, to honor them; at other times to show them their gratitude; at other times to prove that they are sorry for having offended or grieved their parents; and again, to obtain some favor. For all these reasons is sacrifice offered to God. Hence

1. The sacrifice of the Mass is a sacrifice of praise and honor. God, on account of His infinite perfections, deserves infinite praise and honor. All creatures, all the saints and angels in heaven, cannot honor and praise Him as much as He deserves. Only the sacrifice of the Mass is capable of giving adequate honor and glory to God, because in it Jesus Christ, the Son of God, equally infinite with the Father, honors God infinitely by offering to Him in sacrifice His own body and blood. Hence the sacrifice of the Mass is of infinite value.

2. The sacrifice of the Mass is a sacrifice of thanksgiving. God, on account of His innumerable benefits towards us, both in the natural and in the supernatural order, deserves infinite thanksgiving. Were all creatures, all the saints and angels in heaven to thank Him for all eternity, they could not thank Him worthily. But in the sacrifice of the Mass Jesus Christ gives Him infinite thanks for us by offering Him His body and His blood.

3. The sacrifice of the Mass is also a sacrifice of propitiation, or atonement for sin. Were all men and angels to suffer the pains of hell for all eternity, they could not thereby do penance enough for one mortal sin and obtain its forgiveness. But in the sacrifice of the Mass Jesus Christ, by offering His body and blood to God for the sins of mankind, atones and obtains pardon for all of them, and could still do so if their sins were a hundred million times more numerous and more horrible than they are. But this pardon is not granted or applied to us, unless we perform the conditions required to obtain it, as we shall see later.

4. The sacrifice of the Mass is a sacrifice of petition. We need so many things; for we are so poor, so helpless, so unworthy, that of ourselves we cannot do anything for our salvation, and we

are wholly undeserving of obtaining anything from God. But in the sacrifice of the Mass Jesus Christ, by offering to God His body and blood, obtains for us and for all mankind every grace, every good thing we need; and He is able to obtain infinitely more, for His sacrifice is of infinite value. Therefore, children, when you need anything for your salvation, or any temporal good that is not hurtful to your soul, hear Mass devoutly and pray for it then, and our Lord, uniting His prayers with yours, will obtain it for you.

The Ceremonies of the Mass. In order to say Mass properly, the priest has to perform many ceremonies, for instance, many signs of the cross, genuflections, bows, moving from one place to another. All these ceremonies are of ancient origin, full of meaning and conducive to the proper and devout celebration of Mass. (See the Catechism p. 118 et seqq.)

Mass is said in Latin; first, for the sake of uniformity in the Church, and, secondly, because it is a dead language and no longer liable to change, like our modern languages. Moreover, it is not necessary that the people should understand what the priest says at Mass, because he does not address the people, but addresses God, who understands him. In the time of our Lord, the Hebrew, though already then a dead language, was used in the divine worship, and, like the Gospel nowadays, parts of it were explained to the people.

Application. There is nothing more sacred, more pleasing to God, more powerful than the holy sacrifice. Go to Mass as often as possible; this will draw down upon you God's blessing in abundance. At the *Offertory*, offer yourself and your good resolutions to God. At the *Consecration* adore your Saviour present on the altar and offer Him to God for your needs. At the *Communion* have a great desire to receive Jesus into your heart. (Spiritual communion.)

Anecdote.—In Alexandria there was a pious shoemaker with a large family, who, though he had to work hard all day and sometimes a part of the night for their support, still seemed always quite happy and contented. His neighbor, on the contrary, who had not so many children, and who also worked hard, seemed always unhappy and discontented. One day this neighbor said to the shoemaker: "You seem always so happy, and yet you have to work as hard as I, and you have a larger family to support. How can you get along so well. As for me, I can hardly make enough to live." The shoemaker replied: "It is true, I have to work very hard, for I have a very large family to support; still I succeed very well, and can even lay aside some of my earnings." "But how do you manage it?" "That is a secret. If you wish, I will make it known to you. Come to my house tomorrow morning at half-past five, and I will explain this secret to you." The next morning the neighbor went to the shoemaker's house, and the shoemaker took him to the church to hear Mass. Then, after Mass, he said to his neighbor: "Now go to your work, but come back to me tomorrow morning." The neighbor did so and repeated his visit also on the third day. But after the Mass on the third day he said to the shoemaker: "I know the way to the church well enough; that is no secret; but tell me the secret of your success." "You have already learned my secret," said the shoemaker, "by hearing Mass every day devoutly, we draw God's blessing on our work; we can get along much better than otherwise, and feel so much happier. Try it, and you, too, will experience the truth of my words."

How to hear Mass.—We should hear Mass *devoutly* and *attentively*. Try to follow the priest,

and pay attention at least to the principal parts—the Offertory, the Consecration and Elevation, and the Communion, by uniting your intention to that of the priest. Hear Mass with faith, as if you were present at the sacrifice of our Lord on the cross. Get a prayer-book and use it during Mass; or, at least, have your beads with you and say them.

Holy Communion.

367. What do we receive in Holy Communion?

In Holy Communion we receive the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ for the nourishment of our soul.

The priest, when saying Mass, receives holy Communion under the appearances of both bread and wine; this is necessary for the sacrifice. But the laity receive holy Communion under the appearance of bread only, and yet they, as well as the priest, receive Jesus Christ whole and entire, as has already been explained. Holy Communion is the food of the soul, and is given under the visible sign of corporal food. Going to Communion is sometimes called going to the holy table, receiving the Bread of Angels, the heavenly Bread, Viaticum (food for the journey),

The manna which fed the Israelites for forty years in the desert on their way to the Promised Land (a figure of heaven), was a figure of holy Communion. The manna was corporal food, and holy Communion is the food of the soul. Manna fell from heaven, and Jesus Christ in holy Communion comes from heaven. Manna was given to the people of God, and holy Communion is given to the members of the Church. Manna was given for the journey in the desert, and holy Communion is

given to us in this life on our journey to heaven. Manna contained all sweetness, and holy Communion contains all graces. Those who gathered more manna had no more than the others who gathered less; and in holy Communion Jesus is whole and entire under each appearance and in each part, however small. Manna was preserved in the ark of the covenant, and holy Communion (the Blessed Sacrament) is kept in our tabernacles.

368. What are the effects of Holy Communion?

The effects of Holy Communion are these:

1) it unites us most intimately with Jesus Christ;
2) it increases in us sanctifying grace;
3) it weakens our evil inclinations;
4) it strengthens us in the practice of all virtues;
5) it cleanses us from venial sins;
6) it preserves us from mortal sins;
7) it is a pledge of eternal life.

"He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood, abideth in Me and I in him" (John 6, 57). *"He that eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, hath everlasting life"* (John 6, 55).

The Blessed Eucharist is a wonderful sacrament, not only because it contains so many wonders, but also because it produces innumerable wonderful effects in the soul, which, says the Council of Trent, are beyond all expression.

1. Holy Communion unites us as intimately with Jesus Christ as the food we eat becomes intimately united with us. Those who receive holy Communion are more highly favored by Jesus Christ than the shepherds who visited Him in the stable of Bethlehem, more than those

little children our Lord embraced and blessed whilst He was on earth. Our Lord could not give us a greater gift, nor show us greater love than by giving Himself to us in holy Communion. After holy Communion we may say: "Jesus is all mine," and we should also be able to add in all truth: "And I am all His." The greatest happiness of the saints in heaven is to be united with God in heaven; and holy Communion should then be our greatest happiness on earth, for with Jesus we receive every good.

2. It increases in us sanctifying grace, and this even more than the other sacraments, for by it we possess our Lord, the Author of grace.

3. It weakens our evil inclinations. We are all more or less inclined to do evil. But as holy Communion intimately unites us with Jesus Christ, and imparts an increase of sanctifying grace, it tends to render us less inclined to commit sin, and enables us more easily to overcome our habitual faults.

4. It strengthens us in the practice of all virtues. Just as corporal food strengthens our body and enables it to work better, so does holy Communion impart strength to our soul for the discharge of our duties. What enabled the martyrs to suffer and die so heroically for the faith? It was holy Communion, the Bread of the strong, that did this. Holy Communion also gave and still gives strength to thousands of young men and young women to overcome their passions, to conquer fearful temptations and dangers, and to lead a pure and holy life.

5. Holy Communion purifies us from venial sins, the greatest of evils after mortal sin, by increasing in our hearts the love of God.

6. It preserves us from mortal sin for the same reason, and because it gives us strength to avoid

danger and overcome temptation, and because it increases grace in us and weakens our propensity to evil. These effects follow holy Communion chiefly when it is frequent. Those who but seldom receive it do not usually derive great or lasting profit from it.

7. It is a pledge of eternal life, for since it removes so many dangers of salvation, and strengthens us to avoid sin and practise virtue, it surely will lead us to heaven. Moreover, our Lord Himself has promised, has pledged Himself to give eternal life to those who are accustomed to eat His flesh and drink His blood. "He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood, hath life everlasting." When the priest gives us holy Communion, he says: "May the body of our Lord Jesus Christ keep thy soul unto life everlasting." Hence, if we wish to be sure of going to heaven, let us often worthily receive holy Communion.

Holy Communion has also an effect, as to the body, for those who receive it often in life, will rise with a more glorious body, sanctified by the reception of that of our Lord. Blessed Nicholas de la Flue lived for twenty years on holy Communion alone; also, Blessed Angela of Foligno lived thus for twelve years!

369. How must we receive Holy Communion to obtain the graces of this Sacrament?

To obtain the graces of this Sacrament we must receive Holy Communion worthily.

370. Who receives Holy Communion worthily?

He receives Holy Communion worthily who receives it in the state of sanctifying grace.

Venial sins do not render Holy Communion unworthy, but they lessen the effect of the graces of Holy Communion.

Strictly speaking, no one, no matter how good and holy he may be, is really worthy to receive our dear Lord—the God of heaven and earth. In going to holy Communion all, the Pope as well as the poorest child, must say: "Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under my roof"—into my soul. Nevertheless, if we prepare ourselves well and are free from mortal sin, God will account us worthy to receive Him. He who has on his soul only venial sins, does not receive unworthily, for he still possesses sanctifying grace, by which he is pleasing to God, and is also the child of God. But the more free we are from venial sins, the more worthy we are to receive holy Communion, and the more graces we derive from it. Hence it is well to confess even our venial sins before going to holy Communion.

371. Who receives Holy Communion unworthily?

He receives Holy Communion unworthily who knowingly receives it in the state of mortal sin.

372. Why is an unworthy Communion a fearful crime?

An unworthy Communion is a fearful crime because it is the most horrible sacrilege.

He who receives Holy Communion unworthily, profanes not merely a sacred thing, but the *Person of God* Himself; he compels God to enter a heart wherein dwells mortal sin, which is most hateful to Him.

Dear Children, an unworthy or sacrilegious Communion is so great a crime, that it would be better never to receive holy Communion at all, than to receive it unworthily. It is the greatest of sacrileges, because it profanes what is most holy, the Person of God Himself—the very body and blood of the Son of God! It is the greatest insult that can be offered to Him, worse even than if the Sacred Host were

thrown into filth, for it forces Him to enter a heart full of corruption and in the possession of the devil.

373. What does St. Paul say of him who receives unworthily?

St. Paul says: "Whosoever shall eat this bread, or drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily: shall be guilty of the Body and of the Blood of the Lord . . . he . . . eateth and drinketh judgment to himself: not discerning the body of the Lord" (I. Cor. 11, 27. 29).

The treason of Judas.

Consequences: blindness and hardness of heart, other temporal punishments, eternal damnation.

What a terrible saying! The unworthy communicant, like those who put our Lord to death, is guilty of a horrid crime against His body and life. In olden times criminals, condemned to death, were compelled to eat the sentence of their condemnation, to signify that they had within themselves their own condemnation, and could no longer be separated from it. The same is to be said of the unworthy communicant, who has no greater respect for the body and blood of the Lord than if it were ordinary food.

The unworthy communicant commits the same crime as Judas did in betraying our Lord with a kiss—a mark of love and affection; for, whilst pretending to love our Lord, he receives Him into his heart full of sin and possessed by the devil. An unworthy Communion separates the sinner from Jesus, strengthens his evil inclinations, deprives him of spiritual strength, disposes him to commit every kind of grievous sin, and is a pledge of eternal damnation.

Consequences of an unworthy Communion.— After Judas had communicated unworthily, Satan, as the Evangelist tells us, entered into him, and he had no longer any peace, but betrayed our Lord, and then, regretting this crime, he despaired and went and hanged himself, and his soul was eternally lost.—In like manner, the unworthy communicant becomes spiritually blind, does not see or realize the extent of his crime, and falls into other great sins, till he becomes perfectly reckless and so hardened in sin that nothing is any more able to make a good impression on him or convert him.—A certain young man, going into bad company, soon joined a band of robbers and burglars. But he was very timid and felt great remorse when he had to help the others to rob and steal. He mentioned this fact to one of his evil companions, who, however, laughed at him and told him to communicate unworthily, and he would lose all fear and remorse. He followed this wicked advice and then became most reckless in crime, and died in his sins.

Sometimes a sudden and fearful death overtakes the unworthy communicant. A boy in France, immediately after receiving his first holy Communion, was stricken with a fatal illness. He was brought at once to the priest's house, and the priest tried to cheer and encourage him, but the boy said: "I have just made an unworthy Communion," and expired! —In a town in France, where almost everybody had lost the faith, a boy was dismissed from the first Communion class, because he would neither learn his catechism nor behave himself well. In spite of this his mother bade him join the first communicants, without confession, and receive holy Communion. He did so; but scarcely had he received holy Communion when he fainted away. He was carried out of the church in a dying condition, and

the priest was called, but the boy said to him: "Away with you, I do not want you." Then, turning to his mother, he exclaimed: "Mother, it is your fault that I have communicated unworthily; it is your fault that I am now going to hell;" and he expired immediately after amid frightful convulsions.

Though an unworthy Communion is a horrible sin, it is not too great to receive pardon, if sincerely repented of and confessed. Do all you can to prepare well for holy Communion, and always make a good and sincere confession, and you need not fear committing so great a crime. Ask our Lord rather to let you die than ever permit that you should make an unworthy Communion.

374. How must we prepare for Holy Communion?

To prepare for Holy Communion we must

1) make a good confession to cleanse ourselves from mortal sins,
2) fast, that is: neither eat nor drink anything from midnight,
3) recite suitable prayers.

"Let a man prove himself: and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of the chalice." (2. Cor. 11, 28).

Persons who are *dangerously sick*, need not be fasting (Viaticum.)

Prayers before Communion: 1) [In answer to the question: Who is He that comes to me? Jesus, my Lord and my God] *faith and adoration.* 2) [To whom is He coming? To me, a poor sinner] *humility and contrition.* 3) [Why does He come? Because He loves me and wishes to save me] *hope, love and ardent desire.*

1. It is absolutely necessary for those who are in mortal sin to make a good confession before receiving holy Communion, otherwise they would be guilty of a horrid sacrilege. As a suitable prepara-

tion for the first holy Communion, a general confession should be made. By this means one may be morally certain of making a worthy first holy Communion.

2. It would be a mortal sin knowingly to go to holy Communion after having taken food or drink —no matter how little, after midnight. The only exception made is in favor of those who are in danger of death. The respect and veneration we owe to Jesus as the food of our souls, demands that we be fasting when we receive Him. If we were to happen to swallow something that cannot in anyway be considered as food or nourishment—such as a button or the like, we may go to holy Communion. Medicine taken after midnight prevents one, not in danger of death, from receiving holy Communion.

When we go to holy Communion, we should be neatly and decently dressed. The dress of girls and women should be modest, and not low-necked or in any way unbecoming. Sometimes children are anxious to make their first holy Communion more for the fine dress then worn, than out of love of our Lord, or a desire to obtain the fruits of holy Communion. That is very wrong. Others are vain and proud of their fine dress at their first holy Communion, and think more about it than about the happiness they have to receive our Lord. That, too, is very wrong. To such our Lord will not impart any blessing.

3. There are no particular prayers prescribed before holy Communion. To keep from distraction, you ought to make use of your prayer-book and slowly and devoutly read the Preparation for holy Communion. Besides this you ought to reflect a little and ask yourself: 1) "Who is coming to give Himself all to me in holy Communion?"

Then enliven your faith, saying: "O my Jesus, true God and true man, I most firmly believe that in holy Communion I am about to receive Thy body, Thy blood, Thy soul and Thy divinity. O Jesus, I adore Thee. Increase my faith." 2) "To whom does Jesus come to give Himself? Reflect and say: "O Jesus, the God of heaven and earth, Thou comest to give Thyself to me, a poor sinner, deserving of hell. I am not worthy to receive Thee. Forgive me my sins, and purify my heart from every stain of sin, that it may worthily receive Thee." 3) "Why does Jesus come to give Himself to me?" Reflect a little, and then say: "O Jesus, Thou givest Thyself entirely to me, because Thou lovest me, notwithstanding my unworthiness, and wishest to save me. In Thee, O Lord, I place all my hope. Thee, O Lord, I love above all things. O Jesus, come into my heart; it yearns after Thee. Come and fill it with Thy love, and unite me to Thyself, that I may always love Thee, and be united to Thee, both in this life and the next. Come, O my Jesus, my only Love, come! O Mary, my dear Mother, my holy guardian angel, and all my holy patrons, help me to love Jesus and to receive Him worthily."

375. How should we approach the holy table?

We should approach the holy table with the greatest reverence, with hands joined, and eyes cast down.

At the holy table we should kneel, spread the communion-cloth over our hands, hold the head erect, extend the tongue a little over the lower lip, and most reverently receive the Sacred Host.

When we receive holy Communion during Mass, we should, after the *Domine, non sum dignus,* which precedes the Communion of the priest, proceed to the holy table, slowly and devoutly, with hands

joined before our breast, and our eyes modestly cast down. At the holy table we should so hold the communion-cloth under our chin that, if the priest should happen to let the Sacred Host fall from his hand, it would prevent It from falling to the ground. When the priest is about to give us the Sacred Host, we should, without staring at him, hold our head erect, open our mouth moderately, and extend our tongue a little beyond our lower lip, so that the priest may conveniently place the Sacred Host upon it. When he has done so, we should slowly and reverently close our mouth, bow down our head, and swallow the Sacred Host as soon as we can. During this time, we should say in our heart to Jesus: "Welcome, my Jesus, my God, my loving Saviour, into my poor heart. O Jesus, I thank Thee, I love Thee." Repeat this many times. After swallowing the Sacred Host, you should make an act of faith, an act of loving thanksgiving in your heart. If the Sacred Host adheres to the roof of your mouth, do not use your fingers, but only your tongue to detach it. Do not chew the Sacred Host; and avoid spitting for at least a quarter of an hour after receiving the Sacred Host.

376. What does the priest say when placing the Sacred Host on the tongue?

When placing the Sacred Host on the tongue the priest says: "May the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ preserve thy soul unto life everlasting. Amen."

377. What should we do after receiving Holy Communion?

After receiving Holy Communion we should return to our place with the greatest reverence, and spend some time in devout prayer.

378. How much time ought we to spend in prayer after Holy Communion?

After Holy Communion we ought to spend at least a quarter of an hour in prayer.

After receiving holy Communion we ought to return to our place slowly, with hands joined before our breast and eyes cast down, in sentiments of profound adoration of our Lord truly present within us, and of gratitude and love for so inestimable a benefit. At our place we should remain in thanksgiving and devout prayer for a quarter of an hour, at the very least, before leaving the church. St. Philip Neri once sent two altar-boys with candles to accompany a person who used to leave the church immediately after receiving holy Communion. When he asked why they did this, they, by order of the saint, gave this answer: "This is to honor our Lord Jesus Christ now really present within you." This taught the culprit a lesson, by which he ever afterwards profited.

379. What prayers should we say after Holy Communion?

After Holy Communion we should say prayers of thanksgiving, renew the acts of faith, hope and charity, and ask of Jesus graces for ourselves and for others.

Prayers after Holy Communion: 1) [In answer to the question: Who is Jesus, and who am I?] *faith, humility, amazement, holy joy;* 2) [What has Jesus done for me, and what have I done for Him?] *thanksgiving, contrition, love;* 3) [What does Jesus ask of me, and what shall I ask of Him?] *fidelity;* promises; *petition for many graces,* for ourselves and others, also for the souls in purgatory.

After returning to your place, it is not well to use your prayer-book immediately. You ought

rather to salute Jesus in your heart, saying: "Jesus, my beloved Jesus, Thou art now truly within me; I welcome Thee, I thank Thee, I love Thee, I love Thee, I love Thee with my whole heart."

1. Reflect on who Jesus is and who you are! "O Jesus, I believe that Thou, the Lord of heaven and earth, true God and true man, my loving Redeemer, art now truly in my heart; in the heart of a miserable sinner who has so often offended Thee. Oh! Lord, how couldst Thou, holiness itself, condescend to come and dwell in my sinful heart! O Jesus, what ineffable happiness is this for poor me!"

2. "O Jesus, for my sake, Thou wert not content with becoming man, with being born in a stable, amid poverty and privations, with dying for me on the cross amid fearful torments after shedding all Thy blood; but for the love of me, who have so frequently and so ungratefully offended Thee, Thou didst institute the Blessed Sacrament, and Thou now feedest me with Thy very flesh and blood. O my sweet Jesus, I thank Thee with my whole heart, and beg Thy forgiveness. O my Jesus, Thou deservest all my love, and I love Thee, I love Thee, I love Thee."

3. "O Jesus, Thou comest to me, to ask me to love Thee, to keep Thy commandments, to give Thee my heart. Here, O Lord, is my heart, I give it to Thee, take full possession of it, that it may be all Thine, and that I may faithfully keep Thy commandments and avoid sin and all its occasions. But, O Jesus, I am so weak and inconstant; if Thou dost not help me, I shall not be able to avoid sin, to keep from offending Thee. Give me strength to conquer my passions and overcome temptations." Then ask for those graces you need the most, and pray for your parents, relatives, benefactors, for

your pastor, teachers, for poor sinners, and for the suffering souls in purgatory.

The whole day of Communion we should spend, as far as we can, in sentiments of gratitude, love and greater fidelity to God.

Children should be admitted to their first holy Communion, as soon as they are well instructed in the catechism and are able sufficiently to appreciate so great a favor. No strict rule should be made concerning the age of the first communicants, for some are fit at an early age, and others are unfit even when twelve or thirteen years old. This should be left to the prudent judgment of the pastor or instructing priest.

We ought to receive holy Communion often—as often as it is necessary to keep us in the state of grace. Every one ought then to receive it at least once a month. This is the wish of the Church, although she strictly commands us, under threat of excommunication, to do so at least once a year.

Spiritual Communion.—Pious people have a great longing for holy Communion, and when they cannot receive it, they are accustomed to make a spiritual Communion at the Communion of the priest, whenever they assist at Mass, and also when they visit our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. We should imitate their example, and with a great longing for the body and blood of Christ, we should say in our heart: "O my Jesus, I believe that Thou art truly present in the Blessed Sacrament. I long to receive Thee; but since I cannot do so sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I welcome and embrace Thee, as if Thou wert really present within me; do not permit me to be ever separated from Thee." A spiritual Communion well made will draw many blessings upon

us, and help us to receive our Lord worthily when we go to holy Communion.

Application. Have a great desire for Holy Communion. You can never be happier nor richer than when you receive God into your heart. He is the Author and Source of all graces. Receive Holy Communion frequently and be well prepared; remember, Holy Communion is a pledge of eternal life. Every year celebrate the anniversary of your first Holy Communion.

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4. Penance.

The word penance has several meanings. It may mean a punishment; also sorrow for sin, or suffering or self denial to atone for sins. Here it means one of the sacraments instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ.

380. What takes place in the Sacrament of Penance?

In the Sacrament of Penance the priest remits sins.

Definition: Penance is the Sacrament in which the priest remits sins.

To remit sins Christ instituted two sacraments, the one to remit sins of men when they become members of the Church, and that is baptism, as we have seen; and the other, penance, to remit the sins committed after baptism by the members of the Church. Happy are those who have never lost the sanctifying grace received in baptism. We sinners should thank God for having so mercifully instituted the sacrament of Penance to increase sanctifying grace in us, or to impart it anew to us after we have lost it by mortal sin. Had He not done this we should have but little hope of salvation.

381. From whom did the priest receive the power of forgiving sins?

The priest received the power of forgiving sins from God—in the Sacrament of Holy Orders.

When on earth Christ forgave sins, for instance, in the case of the man sick of the palsy, of Mary Magdalen, of the good thief; to prove His power to do so, He performed miracles. He imparted the power of forgiving sins to His Church. When a priest is ordained, the bishop imposes hands on him saying: "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them." How grateful we should be to God for having given such power to priests! When at confession the priest forgives us our sins, we may be sure that they are really forgiven, for Christ Himself says so.

382. To whom did Christ first give the power of forgiving sins?

Christ first gave the power of forgiving sins to His Apostles.

"Jesus breathed on the Apostles, and said to them: Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them: and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained" (John 20, 22, 23).

Before ascending to heaven our Lord imparted to His Church the power He possessed and exercised of forgiving sins. Hence, the evening of the day on which He rose from the dead, He appeared to His apostles, saying: "Peace be to you." Then after convincing them that it was really He who appeared to them, He breathed on them, saying—(See above text). Just as God, after He had made Adam's body from clay, breathed into it life, so our Lord, when He breathed on His apostles, actually imparted to them a power which they did

not yet possess. What was that power? The power of judging the sins of men, of forgiving the sins of those who deserve forgiveness, and of retaining, that is, not forgiving the sins of those who are underserving of pardon. He says expressly that those sins which they would forgive would be really forgiven, and those which they would retain, would be retained, that is, not forgiven. The apostles, i. e., the Church, thus received the power of forgiving all sins, even the greatest crimes, no matter how numerous they might be. Thus Jesus Christ instituted the sacrament of Penance. The visible sign in this sacrament consists in the humble, sincere, and contrite confession of sins and in the words of absolution spoken by the priest: "I absolve thee from thy sins." The invisible grace is explained in the next question.

383. What does the Sacrament of Penance take away?

The Sacrament of Penance takes away

1) all mortal sins,
2) all venial sins for which we are sorry and which we confess,
3) the eternal punishment,
4) at least a part of the temporal punishment.

1. A good confession, that is, the sacrament of Penance, remits all mortal sins, not only those actually confessed, but even those that were forgotten, but which the penitent desired to confess. If the confession is bad, no sins at all are forgiven.

2. A good confession remits all the venial sins repented of and confessed, but no other venial sins.

3. A good confession remits not only all the mortal sins, but also the eternal punishment they deserve, and thus rescues the sinner from hell.

4. It remits also a part of the temporal punish-

ment due to sin, and this, in proportion to the intensity of the contrition.—The sacrament of Penance is like a court in which the priest is judge, and the penitent is both accuser and accused, and also the only testifying witness. After hearing the whole case, the priest, as judge, pronounces sentence, either forgives or retains the sins confessed, and imposes punishment in proportion to the degree of guilt.

384. What does the Sacrament of Penance give us?

The Sacrament of Penance gives us

1) sanctifying grace, if it was lost;
2) an increase of sanctifying grace, if it was not lost;
3) many special graces for a devout life.

1. When we have mortal sins to confess, the sacrament of Penance not only remits them, but also restores to us the sanctifying grace which we had lost by mortal sin, and also all the merits we had previously acquired but had lost by committing mortal sin. How good and merciful is God to us!

2. If we are already in the state of grace before confession, we receive in the sacrament of Penance an increase of sanctifying grace, and our soul becomes more beautiful and pleasing to God.

3. By a good confession, we receive many actual graces, especially the grace to resist temptation more promptly and courageously, and to keep more faithfully the commandments of God.—A good confession gives us peace of mind and makes us feel happy. If we have committed some very grievous sin and we confess it properly, after confession we feel as if a heavy load had been taken off our conscience, and we are full of joy.

385. What must we do to receive the Sacrament of Penance worthily?

To receive the Sacrament of Penance worthily, we must

1) invoke the Holy Ghost,
2) examine our conscience,
3) be sorry for our sins,
4) make a firm purpose of amendment,
5) confess our sins,
6) make satisfaction.

Of all these conditions only one is to be performed in the confessional—the confession.

1. We must invoke the Holy Ghost.

386. Why must we invoke the Holy Ghost?

We must invoke the Holy Ghost

1) that He may enlighten us to know our sins well,
2) that He may help us to be heartily sorry for them,
3) that He may assist us to confess them sincerely.

1. We need light to discover our sins in our consciences, just as light is needed to see spots in our clothing; and to obtain that light, we must pray to the Holy Ghost.

2. As contrition is the most important part of the sacrament of Penance, and can never be dispensed with or supplied, we must do all we can to have the right kind of contrition for our sins. Hence we should beg the Holy Ghost for the grace of true contrition.

3. As we must sincerely confess at least our

mortal sins, and as it is usually very hard to do so, we must ask the Holy Ghost to give us grace and courage to tell our sins in all sincerity.

387. How may we invoke the Holy Ghost?

We may invoke the Holy Ghost by saying: "Come, O Holy Ghost, and help me, that I may know my sins, be heartily sorry for them and confess them sincerely."

Our Father, etc.

It is well to beg the Blessed Virgin, your guardian angel and holy patrons to help you to find out your sins and to make a good confession. In case we should forget to invoke the Holy Ghost, it does not render our confession bad, but then we do not get so much help from God as we otherwise should.

2. We must examine our conscience.

388. What means: to examine our conscience?

To examine our conscience means: to bring to our mind the sins we have committed.

We have a conscience. It is like an interior voice which tells us, before we act, whether what we intend to do is right or wrong. It also tells us to do our duty and warns us not to do wrong. If we have done what is right, it approves our conduct and makes us feel content, but if we have done wrong, it reproaches us with our sin and makes us uneasy. To examine our conscience is to think over and find out what our conscience reproaches us with having done wrong. We must examine our conscience on the sins we have committed since our last good confession. But as we are not strictly bound to confess our venial sins—though it is very good and useful to do so—we are not strictly bound

to examine our conscience on any but our mortal sins, to find out, as far as we can, what mortal sins we have committed, and how often we have committed them. It is very useful, however, to examine our conscience also on our principal venial sins, especially, if they are habitual, so that we may confess them and thus more easily avoid them, and shun the mortal sins which they may, sooner or later, lead us to commit.

Pious Christians usually examine their conscience every evening at night prayers, to find out and repent of the sins they have committed during the day. Those who do so regularly, will not find it difficult to examine their conscience before confession. Children can easily make their evening examination by reflecting on what evil thoughts, words and acts they were guilty of during the day at home, at church, at school, in the street.

389. Which is the best manner of examining our conscience?

The best manner of examining our conscience is to think on the commandments of God and of the Church, and to ask ourselves at each commandment: How have I sinned against it?

Table of Sins.

Children going to confession would do well to examine their conscience according to the Table of sins p. 109 in the catechism. It is not enough to find out what sins we have committed; we must also find out how many times each mortal sin was repeated. Not all the sins enumerated in the Table of sins are mortal. The first questions we should ask ourselves in examining our conscience are these: When did I make my last confession? Was it a good one? If not, then, when was my last good

confession made? How many bad confessions have I made since then, and what sacraments have I received in the meantime?—Why was that confession, why were those confessions bad?—Did I perform the penance imposed on me at my last (good) confession?—Then we should proceed to use the Table of sins. (Children are liable to commit mortal sin principally with regard to missing Mass on days of obligation, breaking the law of abstinence, the sixth and ninth commandments.) If we committed a sin we think to be grievous, and do not know how to confess it, we have only to tell the priest of it, in confession, and he will help us to confess it properly. (Children and even adults are liable to confess wrongly all secret sins against the sixth commandment as merely "bad thoughts.")

3. We must be sorry for our sins.

Contrition is absolutely necessary to obtain the forgiveness of our sins. It is as necessary in the sacrament of penance as water in the sacrament of baptism.

390. Who is sorry for his sins?

He is sorry for his sins who sincerely regrets having committed them.

When we carefully examine our conscience, we cannot but regret having committed at least some of our greater sins; like St. Peter who, after thrice denying our Lord, deeply regretted his great sin. He wept bitterly over his sin. Our sorrow may be not only good and sincere, but even very deep, although we do not and cannot weep over our sins. Our sorrow, however, must always be interior, that is, in the heart.

391. Why must we be sorry for our sins?

We must be sorry for our sins because by them we have offended God, and deserve to be punished by Him.

Sorrow for our sin — contrition.

Natural contrition: sorrow on account of disgrace, temporal loss, etc. — useless for confession. *Supernatural contrition:* sorrow on account of God. It is 1) *imperfect* — (fear of hell...); — sufficient for confession. 2) *Perfect* — (love of God, who has loved us first — numberless blessings). *Perfect contrition* (which includes the desire for the sacrament) takes away sin even before confession. We should, therefore, make an act of perfect contrition: 1) As often as we committed a mortal sin; 2) When in danger of death. We must confess the sins in our next confession.

There was a boy who was severely punished by his father for cursing and for disobedience. He was sorry for cursing and disobeying on account of the punishment he received. That was only a natural sorrow and if he has no other sorrow when he goes to confession and tells his sins, it will be of no use to him, and his confession will not be a good one. Why?—A man goes to confession and accuses himself of having been very drunk, and says he is sorry for having been drunk, because he was put into jail for it. Is that the right kind of sorrow for confession?—A boy confesses that he stole some fruit and ate it all, and he is sorry, because it made him very sick. Is his sorrow the right kind of sorrow for confession? No; for that is only natural sorrow. We go to confession and tell our sins in order to obtain pardon from God, because it is He that we offended by our sins. Hence, if we wish God to pardon us, we must be sorry for our sins on account of God. That is supernatural sorrow,—the sorrow we must have

when we go to confession. To be sorry for our sins, because they deserve that God should punish us in hell for them, is a supernatural sorrow, but it is imperfect, because it is selfish, there being in it but little love of God, and it is prompted rather by a slavish fear of punishment.—But if our sorrow for offending God is prompted by our love for Him who has loaded us with benefits and is in Himself deserving of all our love, it is called perfect contrition. When accompanied with the intention of confessing our sins sincerely, its effect is to obtain their forgiveness even before confession; but we must afterwards go to confession and tell them sincerely to the priest. We ought to try to make as perfect an act of contrition as possible before going to confession. Such a contrition is absolutely necessary for our salvation whenever we are in danger of death with mortal sins on our conscience, and we cannot have a priest to whom we may confess them. We should also make an act of perfect contrition, whenever we have had the misfortune of committing a mortal sin, lest a sudden death befall us before we have time to go to confession. When about to retire to rest at night, if we believe we are in the state of mortal sin, we should strive to make an act of perfect contrition and resolve to go to confession as soon as possible; for how many persons, even boys and girls, retire to rest at night in good health, and are found dead in bed the following morning. What happens to them, may happen to us also. Therefore, let us be prepared. If we have the opportunity of being with people dying, especially if no priest is with them, let us help them to make an act of perfect contrition, not merely once, but even several times. By so doing we may save their souls, and secure our own salvation.

392. For what sins must we be sorry when going to Confession?

When going to Confession we must be sorry at least for all our mortal sins.

If we are guilty of venial sins only, we must be sorry for at least *one* of them.

Contrition is *the most important part* of the Sacrament of Penance. Even God Himself cannot forgive him, who is not truly sorry for his sins. *In order to have true contrition*, think 1) of the punishment of sin — (loss of Heaven — hell, — purgatory) — 2) of Jesus on the Cross (bitter passion and death) — 3) of God's love and bounty, His countless benefits — and your ingratitude.

We must be sorry for all our mortal sins without exception, otherwise our confession will be sacrilegious, and we shall not obtain the forgiveness of any of our sins, but shall add to them the sin of sacrilege. If we have only venial sins to confess, we must be sorry for at least one kind of venial sins, otherwise our confession would be null and void, and also sacrilegious for the want of contrition, the most important and wholly indispensable part of the sacrament of Penance. We ought to be sorry for every venial sin, it is true, but to render our confession valid, we need be sorry for only one kind of venial sins, since they need not be confessed at all, because they may be forgiven and expiated also by other means besides the sacrament of Penance. But we are bound to confess all our mortal sins, because in the ordinary course of things they cannot be forgiven without the sacrament of Penance.

In case of necessity, the examination of conscience, and the telling of sins and the satisfaction may all be dispensed with; for instance, when a person is unconscious, unable to speak, or no priest can be had; but contrition can never be omitted or dispensed with, for God will not, cannot forgive him who is not sorry for having offended Him.

To excite in us a true contrition for our sins, we should not only pray to God to give it to us, but we should also reflect on some of the principal reasons why we should be sorry for our sins. For instance, mortal sin causes us to lose heaven and its joys, and renders us deserving of the endless torments of hell. It was our sins that nailed the Son of God to the cross and caused Him to die thereon; let us then grieve over our sins and ask Jesus to forgive us. Also, God is our greatest Benefactor, and constantly loads us with benefits. By sinning we show ourselves ungrateful and thankless; let us, then, repent of our sins and base ingratitude.

4. We must make a firm purpose of amendment.

393. Who has a firm purpose of amendment?

He has a firm purpose of amendment who is fully determined to do better and never more to commit a mortal sin.

He who is fully resolved not to sin must also be resolved to avoid the proximate *occasion* of sin: everything that easily leads to sin, as bad company, etc.

He who is guilty of venial sin only, must be determined to avoid at least *one* of them.

He who is truly and sincerely sorry for his sins, will surely be determined not to commit them any more. Therefore our confession is not good, if we are not firmly resolved to avoid all mortal sins. Now, if we are thus sincerely resolved, we shall also be resolved to avoid those persons, those things, those places, that always lead us into mortal sin whenever we frequent them, such as bad company, bad books, and the like. They are called the proximate occasion of sin. If we still intend to frequent the proximate occasion of sin, it is a clear proof that we are not sincerely resolved to avoid

sin, that we are not sincerely sorry for our sins. To go unnecessarily into the proximate occasion of sin is already a mortal sin, because we thus rashly expose ourselves to a great danger of sinning.

If we have only venial sins to confess, we ought, of course, also be resolved to avoid all of them; but, as for a valid confession it suffices that we be sorry for one kind of venial sins, so also it is sufficient for a valid confession that we are firmly resolved to avoid at least one kind of venial sin.

394. How may we make an act of contrition and a firm purpose of amendment?

We may make an act of contrition and a firm purpose of amendment by saying:

O merciful God: I have sinned! I am no longer worthy to be Thy child.—Thou hatest sin; I have loved it. Thou punishest sin severely; I have despised Thy punishment. Thou hast always been so good to me and I have offended Thee. Thou hast suffered so much for me and I have grieved Thee.—Ah, I am sorry and it grieves me to have been so ungrateful. Pardon me, O best of Fathers, and accept me again as Thy child. I love Thee with all my heart and I will never more offend Thee.

5. We must confess our sins.

395. What means: to confess?

To confess means: to tell our sins sincerely to the priest.

Our Lord made His priests the judges of the sins of men; He gives them the power to forgive and to retain sin, not as they please, but in a just

and fair way, that is, to remit the sins of those who deserve forgiveness, and to retain the sins of those who do not deserve forgiveness. To do this is to act as judge. But a judge cannot pass sentence, until he has a clear knowledge of the case. The priest must therefore know what sins a person has committed, whether he is really sorry for them and fully resolved never more to commit them, and to repair whatever harm or injury he may have done to his neighbor by his sins. All this the priest cannot know, unless the sinner makes a sincere confession, that is, tells him his sins, and whatever else the priest should know to be able to judge whether that person deserves to have his sins forgiven.

Not every priest may hear confessions; a bishop can hear confessions all over his diocese, and can give to priests the same power. A priest may forgive sins only in those dioceses or places where he has received the faculty to do so, and nowhere else.

We must confess our sins sincerely, that is, tell the truth about them, and not conceal or exaggerate them, or diminish their number, but tell exactly what special kind of mortal sins we have committed.

396. What sins must we necessarily confess?

We must necessarily confess all our mortal sins.

397. How must we confess if we have committed the same sin more than once?

If we have committed the same sin more than once, we must tell how many times we have committed it.

It is every time a new sin although it has the same name. Mention exactly, or about, how many times.

Aggravating circumstances (stealing — to steal from the church; striking others — striking our parents) must also be mentioned.

We are bound to confess all our mortal sins, because each one suffices to cause us to lose our soul. If we wilfully conceal a mortal sin, or the number of times we committed a mortal sin, our confession is a horrid sacrilege. We must confess as near as we can the number of our mortal sins, for the priest cannot judge whether we deserve forgiveness or not, unless he knows how guilty we are. He who neglects to hear Mass twenty times is far worse than he who neglects it only once in the same space of time. In like manner, he who curses perhaps only once or twice a month, is far less guilty than he who curses dozens of times every day. If we cannot tell the exact number of our mortal sins, let us tell it as near as we can. If the sin is frequent and of daily or weekly occurrence, let us say about how often we committed it daily or weekly. As there is no necessity for confessing only venial sins, so likewise we are not bound to tell their exact number when we confess them, as we shall see in the following question.

398. Is it necessary to confess venial sins?

It is not necessary to confess venial sins, but it is good and advisable to do so.

It is very beneficial to confess our venial sins, especially the principal ones, for it helps us to avoid them, as well as the danger of growing reckless and falling gradually into mortal sin. Usually it is by not caring for venial sins that we gradually fall into mortal sins. Moreover, it is sometimes very difficult to decide whether this or that sin is mortal or venial, whether we are bound under pain of damnation to avoid certain actions. Therefore it is best to confess those sins, and ask our confessor for advice.

399. Is the priest ever allowed to tell anything he has heard in confession?

The priest is never allowed to tell anything he has heard in confession, not even, if by doing so, he could save his own life or that of others.

Seal of confession. St. John Nepomucene.

The seal of confession means that a priest's lips are sealed and that he is not allowed, under any consideration, even to save his own life or that of others, to reveal to any one the sins of the persons who made their confession to him. He may not speak of matters of confession even to his penitent outside of confession. Of course, if the penitent gives permission, or requests the priest to speak, the priest is allowed to do so. This is sometimes done by great sinners converted in a remarkable way, in order to edify and lead other sinners to a sincere conversion. A priest who would break the seal of confession, would never more be allowed to hear confessions, or say Mass, or discharge the office of priest. Even apostate priests have never gone so far as to reveal the sins of the people whose confessions they had heard.

The priest cannot make use of the knowledge received in confession even to protect himself. For instance, if some one were to confess he was accustomed to steal some of the priest's money, because the priest never locked his room or drawer, the priest after hearing that confession would not be allowed to lock his room or drawer, for this would be violating the seal of confession. In France in 1889 a priest named Dumoulin was condemned to live all his life on a desert island with the worst of criminals, because he had been charged with murdering and robbing a rich woman. The priest made no defense at the trial. Some

years after the priest's sacristan, on his death-bed, acknowledged that it was he who had murdered and robbed the rich woman, and that, to keep from being found out, he had gone at once to confess his crime to Father Dumoulin, in order to keep the priest's lips sealed, and to throw suspicion on him. So the priest suffered disgrace and a terrible punishment, rather than betray the seal of confession.

St. John Nepomucene was the confessor of the pious queen of Bohemia 600 years ago. The impious King Wenceslaus demanded to know what sins the Queen had told him in confession. St. John refused to tell. The King then cast him into prison. But as St. John still remained true to duty and refused to tell, the King had him bound hands and feet and cast into a swift river, and thus St. John died a martyr to the seal of confession. After 600 years his tongue is still preserved and looks as fresh as if it belonged to a living man.—A proof of how God approved his fidelity to duty.

If you happen to overhear something of another's confession, you are bound to secrecy as well as the priest, and would be guilty of mortal sin, if you were to reveal it. [I would here remark, that we should, as a rule, never even speak to others of our own confessions, or of what the priest has said to us or asked of us in confession. Confession and matters of confession are of too serious a nature to be the subject of light conversation.]

100. How does he receive the Sacrament of Penance who through his own fault omits a mortal sin?

He who through his own fault omits a mortal sin, receives the Sacrament of Penance unworthily, and the confession is invalid.

No sins are forgiven him, not even those which he confessed. He commits another mortal sin, a sacrilege.

He who *intends* to confess all his sins, but without his fault *forgets* one or more of them, makes a good and valid confession. He must mention the forgotten sin in his next confession. — General confession.

We may through our own fault omit a mortal sin in confession through some one of the following causes:

1. Through a very great carelessness in examining our conscience. Those who commit mortal sins should especially make a careful examination of conscience; if they are careless in this and then fail to confess a mortal sin, the presumption is that they omit confessing it through their own fault.

2. It is still worse if they remember the mortal sin, but through shame or fear, either do not confess it at all, or do not confess it properly, or, if having committed the sin often they do not tell the correct number of times, although they know it. Do not be afraid of the priest; he will be kind to you. Do not be ashamed to tell him all, for out of the confessional he is not even allowed to think wilfully over what you confess. When you feel afraid or ashamed to confess your sin, tell the priest you have something to confess, and beg him to help you to tell it. He will help you, and after you have confessed it sincerely, you will feel much relieved and even happy and contented, and encouraged to do better in future. It is better not to go to confession than to make a bad confession. St. Augustin says, he who has committed a mortal sin, must confess it, or forever burn in hell. He who has made bad confessions must confess how many bad confessions he has made, and repeat all of them, confessing all the sins he committed since his last good confession.

General Confession.—A general confession is a confession either of all the sins committed during

one's whole life, or of all the sins committed during a certain part of one's life and already confessed in whole or in part. A general confession is necessary for those who have made bad confessions, for, as we have seen, these confessions must be repeated. A general confession is not necessary, but very useful 1) before one's first holy Communion, 2) when one enters a new state of life, v. g., gets married or enters a convent, 3) during a mission, or a jubilee, and 4) in time of dangerous sickness, or when one sees he cannot live long; a general confession is then an excellent preparation for a good death.

When we are to make a general confession, we should first examine ourselves on the sins committed since our last confession, and then on the grievous sins committed during the time over which our general confession is to extend. In beginning our confession, we should notify the priest of our intention of making a general confession.

401. How do we begin our confession?

We begin our confession by saying:

"My last confession was made . . . ago. Since that time I have committed the following sins."

If, when you have properly prepared yourself for confession, there are others to go into the confessional before you, try not to be distracted; do not look around; but say some prayers; and a little before your turn comes, reflect again briefly on what you are to confess, and make an act of contrition. When the priest is ready to hear you, he makes over you the sign of the cross, praying God to be on your lips and in your heart, that you may properly confess your sins. After making the sign of the cross, you should say: "My last confession

was .... ago," telling how long ago it was; "since then I have"—telling your sins one after the other in a soft whisper, but distinctly, so that the priest can hear and understand you, without your being heard by persons outside the confessional.

402. What do we say when we have told our sins?

When we have told our sins we say:

"For these and all the sins of my life, I am most heartily sorry, because by them I have offended God. I am firmly resolved to amend my life and to sin no more."

If after telling your sins, there is still one you do not know how to confess, or are ashamed to tell, say to the priest: "Father, please help me, for I have done something else I do not know how to tell, or I am ashamed to confess." When you have confessed all you know, say slowly and sincerely the words contained in the above answer, because it is a renewal of the contrition and the firm purpose of amendment. Then listen attentively to what the priest may tell or ask you; answer his questions truthfully, be willing to do what he requires of you, and accept the penance he imposes on you. In case you do not understand him, beg him to repeat what he said or asked you, or the penance he gave you.

6. We must make satisfaction.

403. What means: to make satisfaction?

To make satisfaction means: to perform the penance given by the priest in confession.

The priest is bound to impose on every sinner at confession works of penance, that is, he must tell

the penitent what penance he is to perform. This penance usually consists of some prayers; but it may consist of other good works, such as fasting, alms-giving, hearing Mass, etc. If the penitent says inwardly: "I will not do that penance," he commits a grievous sin, and renders his confession null and sacrilegious. If you are not able to do the penance the priest gives you, tell him so respectfully, and he will give you a penance you are able to perform. You should do the penance just as the priest prescribes it, that is every day for the length of time he tells you. If he prescribes it to be said or done only once, you should do the penance as soon as possible after your confession. If you forget what penance he gave you, then say what you have reason to suppose it was. If you forget to perform your penance, it is no sin. But if you wilfully neglect to perform your penance, you commit a sin; and if the penance was imposed for mortal sins, it is a grievous sin and must be confessed at the next confession.

404. Why does the priest give us a penance in confession?

The priest gives us a penance in confession in order

1) that we may expiate the temporal punishment,

2) that we may amend our life.

1. Even after the sin is forgiven, there is usually some temporal punishment that the sinner must undergo on its account, as we see in the example of Moses; for his sin of doubt in God's word, although it had been forgiven, he was excluded from entering the promised land; and in David to whom the prophet Nathan said by order of God:

"God has taken away thy sins, but thy son shall die."

2. The penance given in confession serves not merely to atone for past sins, but also to preserve from future sins, like a medicine that prevents relapse into sickness. The penance given by the priest is usually so light, that good Christians often do more than the priest requires. This is worthy of imitation, but not obligatory.

Absolution.

405. How does the priest give absolution?

The priest gives absolution by saying: "I absolve thee from thy sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

Absolution means: freeing from; and is a freeing of the penitent from his sins, a forgiving of his sins. When the priest is imparting absolution to you, renew your act of contrition slowly and devoutly. Absolution restores life and God's friendship to the soul that is dead through mortal sin, or increases sanctifying grace in the soul already possessing grace.

406. What should we do after we have received absolution?

After we have received absolution we should give thanks to God, renew our good resolutions, and, if possible, perform the penance.

It is not becoming to leave the church as soon as we have received absolution, but we should remain some time, thanking God with all our heart for His goodness in forgiving us, who were so unworthy of forgiveness, and renewing our good

resolutions to shun sin and its occasion. Then let us perform our penance, or a part of it, and beg the Blessed Virgin, our holy patron and our guardian angel to help us to keep our resolutions. It is always well to use our prayer book, both before and after our confession.

Application. Go often to confession; always prepare well for it. Be sincere in confession — it is better not to confess at all than to be insincere in confession. Never postpone confession when you have had the misfortune to commit a mortal sin. You might die suddenly and be eternally lost.

Dear children, after your first holy Communion you should endeavor to go to confession at least once a month. If something prevents you from going to confession for your regular Sunday, be sure to go for the very next Sunday, and do not put it off till the following month. Those who thus put it off, run the risk of even missing their Easter duty in the course of time and of going entirely astray, as so many others have done in the past.

Charles was a good boy, who at his first holy Communion had made this vow: "If I ever have the misfortune of falling into mortal sin, I will go to confession on the same day." It once happened that he was in company with some bad boys, who used obscene language. Charles did not leave them, but gradually took delight in listening to them and yielded to bad thoughts. But soon he was filled with remorse at having thus sinned grievously, and thought of his vow. Although it was raining very hard, and he had to walk six miles to go to confession, he went at once. After his confession he returned home contented and happy and at night went to bed. When his mother wanted to call him up the next morning, she found him a corpse.—Oh!

how happy must not Charles now be in the next world at having kept his vow and not having deferred his confession!

Indulgences.

407. How is the eternal punishment remitted?

The eternal punishment is remitted by the Sacraments of Baptism and Penance.

Punishment is due for sin; a mortal sin deserves eternal punishment, and venial sin, a temporal punishment. Baptism remits all sins and all the punishments due to them. Penance remits sin and eternal punishment, but not all the temporal punishment.

408. By what means principally do we obtain the remission of the temporal punishment?

We obtain the remission of the temporal punishment principally by gaining indulgences.

Definition: An indulgence is the remission of the temporal punishment due to sin.

Hence indulgence is not a forgiveness of sin, for to gain an indulgence, we must be free at least from mortal sin; nor is it a permission to commit sin, as some bigoted people seem to suppose, for he who would be resolved to sin, could not gain an indulgence.

409. Who can grant indulgences?

The Pope as Vicar of Jesus Christ, can grant indulgences.

"Whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in Heaven" (Matt. 16, 19).

Bishops also can grant some indulgences.

The Pope has the power to remit sins and the eternal punishment due to sin, and this for the

whole Church. As Vicar of Christ and successor of St. Peter, he has all power concerning men's salvation, and can, therefore, remove all that prevents them from going to heaven. No one, however holy, can enter heaven so long as he has not undergone the temporal punishment due to sin, for every sin deserves punishment and is a debt to the justice of God. Venial sins deserve temporal punishments, and to mortal sins already forgiven there are still due temporal punishments. To enable the faithful to pay these debts of temporal punishments to the Divine Justice for themselves or for the souls in purgatory, there is a treasure in the Church, consisting of the satisfactory merits of Jesus Christ, of the Blessed Virgin and of the saints. The satisfactory merits of Jesus Christ are infinite, and those gained by the Blessed Virgin, who never sinned, were not needed by her, and those of the saints were far greater than they needed to satisfy for their sins; hence all these merits form the treasure of the Church which is in the hands of the Pope, who opens it and distributes from it by granting indulgences for the benefit of those of her children who are indebted to God's justice for temporal punishment. The Pope is like a good father, who takes the money earned by himself and the rest of the family to pay the debts contracted by a spendthrift son. The Pope grants indulgences to the whole Church, and Bishops may grant certain indulgences (40 days) to the faithful of their diocese.

410. What must we do to gain an indulgence?

To gain an indulgence we must strictly perform what the Church prescribes.

Recite the prescribed prayers *orally*.

Plenary and partial indulgences. Indulgences of 50, 100

days, etc. According to the intention of the Church an indulgence of one day remits as much punishment as was remitted in ancient times by one day of ecclesiastical penance. Quarantine = 40 days.

Many indulgences are also applicable to the poor souls in purgatory.

To gain an indulgence we must be in the state of grace. Since it is not an obligation, but a privilege to gain an indulgence, the conditions required for gaining it, must be strictly and literally fulfilled; no priest or confessor can dispense from any of the conditions, unless it be so stated in the grant of the indulgence. When one of the conditions is to pray for the intentions of the Pope, it suffices for this to say five Our Fathers and Hail Marys for the Pope's intentions. The prayers that have an indulgence attached to them, must be recited orally, in order to gain the indulgence.

A plenary indulgence is the remission of all the temporal punishment due to sins, and a partial indulgence is the remission of only a part of said punishment. The most solemn form of plenary indulgence is that of the Jubilee—regularly granted every 25th year in Rome, and the following year extended to the rest of the world. The Pope for special reasons grants an extraordinary Jubilee also at other times.

In the early ages of the Church public sins had to be confessed publicly, and for these public penances were enjoined. Those guilty of blasphemy, had to stand in penitential dress before the church during Mass for seven Sundays, and fast seven Fridays on bread and water. He who had cursed his parents had to fast forty days on bread and water. To talk in church was punished with a ten days' fast. Sins of impurity were punished with three years of rigorous penance. Now in remembrance of these

canonical penances, the Church grants partial indulgences of 50 or 100 days or more. This means that he who gains such an indulgence, gains as much as if he had performed canonical penance for 50 or 100 days or more. The words 7 quarantines means seven times 40 days. Many indulgences may be applied to the souls in purgatory by way of suffrage, that is, petitioning God to accept the indulgence for their benefit. Most of the plenary indulgences require, in order to be gained, confession, holy Communion, and praying for the intentions of the Pope.

Application. Pronouncing the names of Jesus and Mary: 25 days indulgence; "praised be Jesus Christ — forever:" 50 days; sign of the cross: 50 days; with holy water: 100 days; "My Jesus, mercy!" 100 days; "Sweet Heart of Mary, be my salvation!" 300 days; The Memorare, 300 days; the Angelus, 100 days; the acts of Faith, Hope and Charity: 7 years and 7 quarantines; Litany of the Blessed Virgin: 300 days.

"Mary, my Mother, preserve me this day from mortal sin; 3 Mail Marys;" 200 days, if recited morning and evening. At morning prayers make the intention of gaining during the day all the indulgences you can, and this will enable you to gain them, even if at the time you fulfil the conditions, you do not think of the indulgences.

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5. Extreme Unction.

411. Who ought to receive the Sacrament of Extreme Unction?

Every one who has come to the use of reason and is dangerously sick, ought to receive the Sacrament of Extreme Unction.

Even children of 6 and 7 years, although they have not made their first confession. Persons suddenly taken sick, though they be unconscious or unable to speak.

This sacrament was instituted only for those who are dangerously sick. It is called Extreme Unction or last anointing, because it is the last anointing with holy oil that the Christian ordinarily receives. (The first at baptism, the next at confirmation—ordination.) How good was our Lord to institute a sacrament for the relief of the sick, both in their bodily pains, to help them to bear them patiently, and also in their mental anguish, which is often more terrible than their bodily sufferings, and especially in their agony, when the devil, knowing that it is his last chance, to overcome them, will redouble his efforts to cause them to fall into sin and lose their soul. It is in our last moments that we are more weak and helpless than at other times, and therefore stand in greater need of the divine assistance; hence Jesus Christ has left us the sacrament of Extreme Unction.

To receive the sacrament of Extreme Unction a person must 1) have been baptized and have attained the age of reason, that is, be at least 6 or 7 years of age, and 2) be in danger of death from sickness or accident. Those in danger of death merely from old age, or condemned criminals, or soldiers before battle, are not fit subjects to receive this sacrament. It not only may, but should be administered to dying persons that are unconscious although they may not be capable of confessing or communicating.

412. How does the priest administer Extreme Unction?

The priest administers Extreme Unction by anointing the five senses of the sick person with holy oil, and saying: "Through this holy unction, and of His tender mercy, may the Lord pardon

thee whatsoever sins thou hast committed by the sight, the hearing, etc."

The oil used for Extreme Unction is solemnly blessed by the bishop at Mass on Holy Thursday. With it the priest makes the sign of the cross on each of the five senses of the sick person (sight, hearing, smell, taste and speech, and touch), whilst pronouncing the words above given so as to designate, at the same time, which sense he is anointing. This is the visible sign, whilst the words he pronounces indicate the invisible grace imparted by the sacrament. Oil is healing and fortifying, hence it is well adapted to this sacrament which in its effects is both healing and strengthening. Both eyes, both ears, etc., are anointed. (When a priest receives Extreme Unction his hands, on account of their consecration at his ordination, are anointed on the back, not on the palm, as is done to the laity.)

413. What benefits does Extreme Unction confer on on the soul?

Extreme Unction confers these benefits on the soul:

1) it increases sanctifying grace,
2) it remits the venial sins and those mortal sins which the sick person cannot confess,
3) it gives strength in suffering and temptations.

1. Extreme Unction is a sacrament of the living, and should be received in the state of grace. In this case, it increases sanctifying grace.

2. Extreme Unction remits venial sins, and also the mortal sins for which the sick person is truly

sorry, but which, because he is now unconscious or speechless, he cannot confess. Imperfect contrition in this case is sufficient.

3. Often the sick are prone to impatience, to an undue fear of death and judgment, to great temptations, especially those who have been addicted to a habit of sin. Moreover, the devil sometimes assails them with very strong temptations. Extreme Unction strengthens the sick against impatience and all temptations, and helps them to be resigned to the will of God and to meet death calmly.

414. How does Extreme Unction benefit the body?

Extreme Unction benefits the body by relieving it in its pain and often restoring it to health.

"Is any man sick among you? Let him bring in the priests of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick man, and the Lord shall raise him up: and if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him" (Jas. 5, 14, 15).

Definition: Extreme Unction is the Sacrament, which is instituted for the benefit of the sick.

1. It often happens that the sacrament of Extreme Unction lessens bodily pains. Even infidel physicians acknowledge this.

2. The sacrament of Extreme Unction in not a few cases restores health to those who would naturally have died without it. To some it does not restore health, because, if they were to recover it, they would fall back into their former sins and be lost forever. It does not cure others, because they put off receiving it till they are so far gone, that only an evident miracle could effect a cure. Finally, some even receive it unworthily in the state of mortal sin and without any contrition for their sins.

415. When should a sick person receive Extreme Unction?

A sick person should receive Extreme Unction whilst he still has the use of his reason.

If possible, receive the Sacrament of Penance and Holy Eucharist before being anointed; after Extreme Unction, the plenary indulgence for the hour of death is given.

Those who are dangerously sick often do not realize their danger. Hence the other members of the family, or some good friend, or the physician, should admonish them in time to prepare to receive the last sacraments, and propose to them the reception of Extreme Unction, as giving them greater chance of a cure, and reminding them that they will derive great benefit for both body and soul, if they receive the last sacraments whilst they are in full possession of their senses and able to appreciate them. The sick should, whenever possible, go to confession and receive holy Communion before being anointed.

416. What should be prepared in the sick room for the administration of the Last Sacraments?

For the administration of the Last Sacraments there should be prepared in the sick room

1) a table covered with a white cloth,
2) on the table a crucifix,
3) on each side of the crucifix a blessed candle,
4) holy water,
5) salt or bread,
6) cotton,
7) a glass of water,
8) a table-spoon.

All these things should be prepared before the

priest arrives, or at least by the time he has heard the sick person's confession. If the priest has brought the Blessed Sacrament, those who are present should refrain from speaking unnecessarily, either to him or among themselves, but should kneel down and pray. When the priest enters the sick-room he says: "Peace be to this house and to all dwelling therein." He then lays the Blessed Sacrament on the table and sprinkles the sick person and all in the room with holy water. If he has not previously done so, he now hears the sick person's confession, after all have left the room. Then all return and kneel while he administers holy Communion to the sick person. Next, after some preparatory prayers, he anoints the sick person, first on the eyes, then on the ears, then on the nostrils, then on the lips, then on the palms of the hands, and finally on the soles of the feet, praying at the same time that, through the unction and the divine mercy, God may pardon him (or her) the sins committed by the sight, the hearing, the smell, the taste and speech, the touch, and the steps taken; and with a piece of cotton he wipes away the oil from the places he has anointed. Then, after some prayers, he usually imparts to the sick person the plenary indulgence for the hour of death. He uses the salt or bread to remove the oil from his thumb before washing his hands.

It sometimes happens that a person lives a long time after receiving Extreme Unction. Such a person may and ought to confess and communicate from time to time, but may not again be anointed, unless he has, in the meantime, recovered from danger of death, for no one may be anointed more than once in the same danger. It is advisable to call in the priest to a person in agony, that he may assist him against the assaults of the devil and recite the prayers for the dying.

Application. When seriously sick, send for the priest in time, that you may be able to receive the last Sacraments while fully conscious and with proper devotion. Pray often, while in health, for the grace of a happy death, and that you may not depart this life without the Sacraments.

(Bona Mors, or confraternity for a happy death.)

Our eternal lot depends on the hour of our death. If then we are in the state of grace, we shall be forever happy in heaven; if in mortal sin, we shall forever suffer the terrible pains of hell. Hence pray daily, especially to St. Joseph, for that greatest of graces—a good and holy death—fortified by the sacraments of the Church.—When you are sent to call the priest to a sick or dying person, you should first find out who the sick person is, what sickness he has, whether he has already had the priest, and whether the physicians think he is in any danger, so that you may inform the priest of all this, and that he may know before starting what he will need to bring along to the sick person.

Example.—About thirty years ago, a missionary in South Africa lost his way and came to the house of a Protestant, and made himself known as a Catholic priest. The Protestant said to him: "You have come just in time; one of my workmen, a Catholic, is at the point of death." The priest went at once to visit the dying man. On seeing the priest, he said: "Thanks be to God. St. Joseph, I knew well that thou wouldst send me a priest to prepare me for death." He then told the priest that, when he was a boy, his mother had taught him to pray every day to St. Joseph, saying: "St. Joseph, obtain for me a holy death." When he became a soldier and had to go to South Africa, his mother, when bidding him farewell, again admonished him never to omit saying that prayer daily to

St. Joseph. This he promised, and ever after fulfilled his promise. When he took sick, the nearest priest live one hundred and fifty miles away, and, even had he been sent for, he could not have arrived in time to prepare him for death. But St. Joseph provided for him, for he caused the missionary to lose his way and come to the place where his client was dying, and prepare him for a good death by administering to him the last sacraments. (Practical conclusion.)

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6. Holy Orders.

417. Who can administer the Sacrament of Holy Orders?

Only a bishop can administer the Sacrament of Holy Orders.

This sacrament is instituted only for those who are called by God to the holy priesthood. It can be administered only by a bishop, for a bishop is a successor of the Apostles, and, like them, has the power to ordain priests and consecrate other bishops.

418. How does the bishop administer Holy Orders?

The bishop imposes his hands upon those to be ordained, prays over them, anoints their hands, and delivers to them the sacred vessels with bread and wine.

The ordination of priests takes place at Mass before the Offertory. The Litany of the saints is recited, then the bishop imposes his hands on them; after this, all the priests present do the same. He then consecrates their hands by anointing them with holy oil; he confers on them the power to

say Mass when he hands them the sacred vessels to touch. After the Communion he confers on them the power of forgiving sins, and they promise to obey him and his successors.

419. What power does the priest chiefly receive in ordination?

In ordination the priest chiefly receives the power to offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, and to forgive sins.

In ordination the priest receives powers not conferred on others. He is empowered to baptize solemnly, to administer the sacrament of extreme unction, to open heaven to sinners by forgiving them their sins, to call down the Son of God from heaven into his own hands, when he says Mass, to give Him in holy Communion to the faithful, and to preach the word of God. These powers were not given even to the Mother of God herself, and are far greater than the power to cure the sick and raise the dead to life. And why?—The priest, in his priestly functions, and espcially at holy Mass, personates Jesus Christ, and may be called a second Christ.

420. What special grace does the priest receive in ordination?

In ordination the priest receives the special grace to fulfill his priestly duties in a manner pleasing to God.

Any one may be ordained who has received from God the vocation to the priesthood, who possesses the necessary knowledge and piety, and who has completed his twenty-fourth year.

The sacrament of Holy Order confers not only great powers, but also an increase of sanctifying

grace and special graces, which enable the priest faithfully to discharge his sublime functions. Besides this, it imprints in his soul a special character, by which he is a priest forever. This character can never be removed. If the priest is good and goes to heaven, it will be a bright gem which will increase his glory and happiness; but, if he is bad and loses his soul, he will be known in hell as a priest of God, and will suffer so much the more.

The Pope can dispense with regard to age and allow some to be ordained who are not yet twenty-four years old. It takes years of study to learn all that a priest must know before his ordination. Only those who, besides possessing the necessary learning, are good and pious, and therefore worthy of discharging the sublime powers and duties of the priesthood, should be ordained. Moreover, a special call by God to the priesthood is necessary, for it is God alone who has the right to choose His priests. "You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you." It is the greatest honor and blessing for a boy to be called by God to be a priest, more than if he were called to govern the whole world. Why?

421. What Orders precede ordination?

Ordination is preceded by four minor, and two major Orders.

The series of Orders: (tonsure, by which the cassock is received and the clerical state is entered) *ostiarius* (doorkeeper), *lector* (reader), *exorcist, acolyte* (Mass-server) — *subdeacon* and *deacon.*

The highest order is that of a bishop, since it is a completion of the priesthood.

Clergy — laity.

1. A man is not at once ordained priest; but he has to ascend to the priesthood step by step. He

first receives the tonsure, that is, his hair is cut off by the bishop, to signify he is separated from the world, in order to belong to God; and he is admitted among the clergy, and receives the cassock and surplice.

2. Next he receives the four minor orders—first, *ostiarius*—with the duty to open and close the church doors, to ring the church bell, and to keep order in church during service; second, *lector*, whose office it is to read from Holy Scripture during divine service; *exorcist*, who is empowered to bless bread, to impose hands on those possessed by the devil, and to drive out the devil; fourth, *acolyte*, who is empowered to serve Mass and present wine and water to the priest at Mass.

3. Later on he receives the subdiaconate, the first of the major orders, which enables him to handle the sacred vessels and to sing the epistle at solemn high Mass. A subdeacon is consecrated to God and is a clergyman for life; he is bound to recite the divine office, and may never get married.

4. The next and last step to the priesthood is the diaconate. The deacon assists the priest at Mass, is empowered to sing the Gospel and to preach, and may administer solemn baptism and holy Communion.

5. Above the priesthood is the episcopal state. The Pope is a bishop having power over the whole Church. All these orders make but one sacrament —that of Holy Orders. Those who have received no order are called the laity—the faithful.

Application. Priests are God's representatives: therefore respect them. They are your greatest spiritual benefactors: therefore be grateful to them. They take care of your eternal welfare: therefore you should contribute to their support. "He that serves the altar shall also live by the altar." Pray often for them, as they do for you.

The dignity and power of the priesthood are far above any worldly dignity and power, for priests are the representatives of God; they are endowed with divine powers; they personate our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore we should honor and respect them. We should love them and be grateful to them, because they make us children of God in holy baptism, and restore heaven to us in the sacrament of penance. They instruct us in Christian doctrine, prepare us for and administer to us holy Communion; they prepare us for death, even if they have to risk their own lives by doing so. They are our best friends, advisers and consolers. Let us, then, hearken to and follow their counsels; and, as they devote to our welfare their time, their talents, their strength, and even their life, let us, when later it will be in our power, fulfil the duty of contributing according to our means to their support. Let us never let a day pass without praying for them, that they may ever be good and holy priests, and that God may bless their labors for souls. During the Ember days—the usual time for ordination, let us pray to God for good and worthy priests.

7. Matrimony.

N. B.—The catechist should never omit the instructions on marriage. He should, of course, be very careful in the choice of his expressions and speak only on those points necessary to impress on the minds of the children the holiness of the sacrament of matrimony, and the necessity of obeying the laws of the Church thereupon, and of a proper preparation for its reception. Not a few persons enter the married state, or contract unhappy or even invalid marriages, because they never received

any instructions on this important subject; hence, not realizing, nor even knowing their duties with reference to the reception of this sacrament, many naturally fall into deplorable and even irreparable mistakes.

422. Why is Matrimony sacred?

Matrimony is sacred:

1) because God Himself instituted it in Paradise,

2) because Christ made it a Sacrament.

For the sacrament of Matrimony two persons are required—a single man and a single woman. They leave their parents and say to each other that they will live together until death parts them, and bear together all the trials of life, and help each other in all things temporal and spiritual. The woman gives up her family name and takes that of her husband.

1. Already in the earthly paradise God took one of Adam's ribs, and from it formed the body of Eve, and married Adam and Eve to each other. After the fall, men and women became bad, and no longer considered matrimony as something sacred, and men began to divorce their wives and marry more than one wife. And God even permitted this to the Jews in a few cases, on account of the hardness of their heart.

2. But our Lord Jesus Christ not only restored marriage to its former state, but even raised it to the dignity of a holy sacrament, that is a means of grace and salvation to the married. Therefore, matrimony is something sacred, and must be treated as such.

423. What should be the chief care of those who intend to enter the state of matrimony?

The chief care of those who intend to enter the state of matrimony should be: to see that the other person be also a good and virtuous Catholic.

Religion and virtue, not money and beauty, make matrimony happy.

Those who intend to marry should, first, pray to God to direct them in the choice of the partner He has destined for them. Catholics should not contract a mixed marriage, that is, should not marry non-Catholics, for the Church abhors and forbids such marriages, and it is only to prevent greater evils that she tolerates them. In the next place, they should marry only good, virtuous and practical Catholics, who may assist them in saving their souls. Finally, they should consult their confessor or pastor, to make sure that there is no impediment to their marriage; for instance, relatives may not marry each other.

424. What are two persons called who have promised to marry each other?

Two persons who have promised to marry each other are called bethrothed or engaged.

A promise of marriage is binding. He who breaks such a promise without an important reason, commits a grievous sin.

Although those who have deliberately promised to marry each other, are not yet married, yet they are no longer free to marry other persons, unless they mutually agree to recall their promise, or unless a Catholic has promised marriage to some one that the Church forbids him (or her) to marry. After the engagement, the marriage should take place within a short time.

425. How do bride and bridegroom receive the Sacrament of Matrimony?

Bride and bridegroom receive the Sacrament of Matrimony by declaring in presence of their pastor and two witnesses that they take each other for husband and wife.

Marriage rite — blessing of the ring.

The man and woman who are to be married, go to the church with two witnesses, and when asked by the priest, the man declares that he takes the woman for his lawful wife, and she declares that she takes the man for her lawful husband. After this the priest blesses them, and then the marriage ring, which the husband immediately places on his wife's finger. At least three weeks before marriage the contracting parties should call on their pastor to inform him when they intend to get married, so that the banns of marriage may be published three successive Sundays in Church at the parochial Mass. The priest will also appoint the time when they may come to receive instructions on the sacrament of Matrimony. Finally, before the marriage they make a good confession, so as to receive the sacrament in the state of grace. They would do well to make a general confession, in order to be the better prepared to receive it worthily.

426. When do bride and bridegroom receive the solemn nuptial blessing?

Bride and bridegroom receive the solemn nuptial blessing only at the nuptial Mass.

Hence it is the ardent wish of the Church that all betrothed be married at Mass.

The full nuptial blessing can be imparted only at nuptial Mass. During this Mass the newly married

come several times to the altar to receive special divine blessings, and usually receive holy Communion together. Those who are not married at Nuptial Mass deprive themselves of great graces, which they need so much to fulfil properly their new, important and difficult duties.

(The married couple actually receive the sacrament of Matrimony by their mutual contract, entered upon in presence of the priest. The Church, in the Council of Trent, decreed how this contract is to be made so as to be valid, namely, that it should be made in presence of the parish priest and two witnesses. Wherever the Council of Trent has been promulgated, the marriage of two Catholics is valid only when performed in this way. Elsewhere the marriage of two Catholics, between whom there is no nullifying impediment, would be valid indeed, but, nevertheless, grievously sinful, if contracted in any other way.)

427. Can the bond of marriage ever be dissolved?

The bond of marriage can never be dissolved except by death—it is indissoluble.

A separation by the secular court — the so-called divorce — is of no avail before God and the Church. If a person thus separated marries again whilst the other party is still alive, he or she lives in adultery.

The marriage bond, or tie, cannot be dissolved by any power on earth, not even by the Church or by the Pope. Why? Because, as our Lord says, it is God who joins husband and wife as one, and, therefore, no one can put them asunder, or separate them. God alone has the right to do so, and He does so by death. The divorces granted by secular courts are invalid, and neither the law of the Church nor the law of God allows such divorced persons to get married again, or any one to marry

them, so long as the other parties are alive. Those who after such a divorce marry again, live in sin, and must separate before they can be allowed to receive the sacraments.

428. What grace does the Sacrament of Matrimony give?

The Sacrament of Matrimony gives to the married couple the grace to fulfil the duties of their state.

Besides increasing sanctifying grace, the sacrament of Matrimony imparts also the special graces needed by the married to fulfil the duties of their state.

429. Which are the most important duties of married people towards each other?

The most important duties of married people towards each other are to live in mutual love and fidelity, and to assist each other until death separates them.

The married should be of one heart and one soul, be true to and patient with each other, care for each other until death, and help each other to gain heaven.

430. Which is the chief duty of married people towards their children?

The chief duty of married people towards their children is to give them a good, Christian education.

They should bring them up, not for the world, but for God, who will demand a strict account of the parents.

To teach them early to pray — send them to the Catholic school (not to the public school) — lead them on to virtue and religion by example as well as by words —

guard them against sin — punish them, if necessary — pray for them every day.

(It is principally on account of the duty of parents to educate their children and fit them to earn a living, and saving their soul, that the marriage tie is indissoluble.) Parents must care for the health and life of their children, feed and clothe them; but their principal duty regards the souls of their children; hence they must give their children a good Catholic education, or training, and rear them for God, and not merely for this world. Hence the duties enumerated above. It is a strict duty for parents to keep their children from sin, and to punish them when they deserve it. Parents should often pray for their children, that they may become good and virtuous. It is very sinful for parents to fail greatly in their duties towards their children.

Application. Matrimony is a holy state — it is also a difficult and responsible one. Without the blessing of God, no one can be happy in this state, therefore it should be entered with God according to the rules and wishes of His Holy Church. Whoever enters this state in mortal sin, commits a sacrilege and draws down upon himself the curse of God.

PART IV.
We must Pray.

431. What means: to pray?

To pray means: to raise our soul to God, in order to speak to Him.

We can pray with the heart only — *mental prayer* — or express our thoughts in words — *vocal prayer.* If we pray without thinking of God: *prayer of the lips* — a sin.

When we wish to speak to some one, we go near him. Although God is everywhere present, is not only near us, but even within us, still when we pray we usually consider Him as being in heaven; hence we raise our soul to God in heaven to speak to Him.

1. Our prayer is mental when we merely think it in our mind, in our heart. For instance, John's mother is sick, and without saying anything, John thinks in his mind: "O my God, please cure my mother." There is another kind of mental prayer, called meditation, because we join reflection to inward prayer. For instance, we first think of our Lord dying on the cross for our sins, and, therefore, how wicked sin must be, how much Jesus must love us, since He suffered so much and died to atone for our sins, to save us. Then we make in our mind acts of contrition, of thanksgiving, of love, etc.

2. When we express our prayer in words, it is called vocal prayer, for then the body prays along with the soul. Usually we then kneel down, join our hands and cast down our eyes, or raise them to heaven, etc. Some even pray kneeling with their arms stretched out in the form of a

cross, as Moses did. When we recite vocal prayers, we should pray with attention, and try to drive away all distracting thoughts. If we wilfully pay no attention to the prayers we are saying, our prayers are of no account, and even sinful, for we do not honor God thereby, but are wanting in respect to Him.

432. Why do we pray?

We pray

1) to praise God,
2) to thank God,
3) to beseech God.

Prayer of praise, of thanksgiving, and of petition.

When we behold the beauty of this earth, of the universe (the heavens, the stars, etc.), we are impelled to praise God for His goodness, power, etc., in creating things so grand, so beautiful. When we consider how some people are so wretched, so deformed, so sickly, we feel grateful to God for all His gifts to us, and thank Him for them. When we are in danger of our life, or are assailed by violent temptations, or are in distress, we beseech God to help us, to grant us what we need. We should principally make use of this last kind of prayer, called prayer of petition, that is of asking, on account of our many and constant needs for both body and soul. In heaven the angels and saints need not this kind of prayer, but they constantly praise and thank God.

433. Why must we pray?

We must pray

1) because God has commanded it,
2) because without prayer we cannot remain in the grace of God.

Prayer is as necessary for the soul as food is for the body. The breath of the soul. The key of Heaven. The ladder to Heaven.

All who are in Heaven, are there because they prayed well. All who are in hell, are there because they did not pray well.

1. God commands us to pray. "Ask, and you shall receive." "We must pray always, and not faint." Jesus taught us how to pray in the Our Father. He also taught us by His example, for He prayed in the crib, in the temple, spent whole nights in prayer, prayed in the Garden, on the cross. As He did, so should we do also.

2. Prayer is necessary to receive the sacraments worthily. We can do nothing for our salvation without the grace of God. We can obtain God's grace only through the sacraments or through prayer. But as we need prayer to receive the sacraments, prayer is indispensable for us to obtain God's graces, without which we cannot be saved. To be saved we need especially the grace of a good death, the grace of final perseverance, without which all other graces would be in vain. We cannot deserve this greatest of graces, but we must obtain it through prayer; by praying for it every day, we obtain it every day. Prayer is also the food of the soul, and the soul that does not pray, will soon starve and die spiritually. A soul that does not pray is like a body that has no appetite; we say such a body is sick, because it cannot eat. In like manner, a soul that has no relish for prayer is sick. Prayer is also the breath of the soul. A body that does not breathe is dead. So a soul that does not pray is spiritually dead.— Prayer is also called the key of heaven, because it obtains for us graces that opens heaven to us, that enable us to gain heaven. It is also called the ladder to heaven. By prayer we ascend to heaven

step by step, as long as we live, and we go from the last step into heaven when we die. No one who has attained the age of reason, can go to heaven without prayer. He who will not pray, does not wish to have anything to do with God, and goes further and further away from God the longer he neglects prayer. Some are like that young man who left his parents to go to a foreign country. At first he wrote very frequently to them; then he gradually wrote more and more seldom, till at last he wrote no more to them. After a long time his parents heard that he had died in great poverty and misery. Had he written to them for help, they would have provided bountifully for his wants. (Apply this to those children who later on neglect prayer.)

St. Alphonsus says: "All the adults who are in heaven are there, because they prayed; had they not prayed they would not have reached heaven. All who are in hell are there because they neglected prayer; had they prayed, they would not be in hell." St. John Chrysostom says that those who will not pray are already spiritually dead. Prayer is necessary for the good, that they may remain good and not yield to temptation. Prayer is necessary for sinners, that they may be converted. Prayer unites us to God already on earth; it turns our thoughts and aspirations to heaven; it strengthens us to overcome temptation, and to perform good works; it consoles us in suffering; it helps us in all our bodily and spiritual needs; it obtains for us the grace of final perseverance and heaven. It is, moreover, a great honor to pray, for it enables us to converse with God—the Lord of lords, the King of kings.

434. How must we pray?

We must pray

1) with devotion,
2) with confidence,
3) with perseverance.

Humility — resignation to the will of God.

We pray with humility, when we think in our prayers of our misery and sinfulness. We pray with resignation when we say, for instance, "Lord, grant me .... if such be Thy holy will," or, "if it is not hurtful to my soul."

435. Who prays with devotion?

He prays with devotion, who thinks of God and of what he wishes to say to God.

We ought in our prayers always to think of God and of what we are saying to Him. Often other thoughts come to our mind in prayer; they are called distractions. If we keep them wilfully in our mind during prayer, they are sinful, because to do so is want of respect and reverence to God. They are wilful, when we are the cause of them, v. g., when we look about during prayer. They are wilful when we do not try to drive them away as soon as we perceive them, even though they do not come to us through our own fault. If we do our best to drive them away, it is not only no sin, but a good act which God will reward. Distractions and want of devotion happen usually when we recite prayers we know by heart. It is better to say one Our Father well, than ten carelessly, or with wilful distractions. True devotion does not consist, as some imagine, in feeling pious whilst we are praying. Often our prayers are most devout when we feel so dry, that we have to exert ourselves very

much to be able to say them at all. If involuntary distractions beset you during the whole time of prayer, and you do all you can to drive them away, you please God very much, and He will reward you even more than if you never had a single distraction; and this, because of your good will and of the trouble it costs you to pray.

436. Who prays with confidence?

He prays with confidence, who thinks: "God will surely hear my prayer, because he has promised it."

"All things, whatsoever you ask when you pray, believe that you shall receive, and they shall come unto you" (Mark. 11, 24). *"Ask, and it shall be given you: seek, and you shall find: knock, and it shall be opened to you"* (Matt. 7, 7). *"Amen, amen I say to you: if you ask the Father anything in My Name, He will give it you"* (John 16, 23).

God has promised to grant us all we pray for; He is truth itself; He is all-powerful; He is the best of fathers; Jesus Christ has gained for us by His sufferings and death all that we need. Therefore we have every reason to trust that God will grant us all that we pray for. How many examples of this in the life of Jesus; v. g., the woman who touched the hem of His garment; the centurion, whose servant was sick,—Domine, non sum dignus.

437. Who prays with perseverance?

He prays with perseverance, who does not cease to pray although he may not be heard immediately.

"We ought always to pray and not to faint" (Luke 18, 1).

Examples: The importunate friend. The woman of Chanaan. St. Monica prayed eighteen years for the conversion of her son Augustine.

God has promised to hear our prayers, but He did not promise when; He did not say that He would grant us immediately what we ask. We have no right to demand this. He alone has the right to appoint the time when He will hear us. Many do not obtain what they pray for, because they do not pray long enough for it. Many would have obtained it, had they prayed only a little longer. Let us pray for what we need until we receive it.

Example.—A woman once came to the priest, saying: "My father is very sick and will soon die. He is 93 years old, and has not gone to church for over 50 years, and he does not wish to hear anything about God. I have been praying daily to God for over 34 years for his conversion; but so far all in vain. What must I do?" The priest answered: "Have confidence, continue to pray, and God will surely hear your prayer." She obeyed the priest, and her father, before dying, began of his own accord to recite the Our Father and the Hail Mary, and called for a priest to hear his confession. He devoutly confessed and received the last sacraments, and died soon after. Thus was his daughter's persevering prayer crowned with success. (Relate the examples above mentioned.)

Why does not God hear our prayers immediately?

1. Because it would not be profitable to do so. For instance, if He were to restore health immediately to a sick man, He foresees that that man would soon fall into grievous sins and lose his soul.

2. God wishes us to pray more, and also more highly to esteem His favors.

3. Because He wishes first to give us some other favor, as he did to the dropsical man; He first forgave him his sins, and then cured him.

4. Because He wishes to give us even more than we ask, as He did to St. Monica. For 18 years she had prayed only for Augustine's conversion, and God granted that he should also become a great saint, a Father of the Church, and that she herself should likewise become a great saint.

When the physician prescribes a medicine to be taken three times a day for two weeks, the sick man cannot expect to be cured on the first or second day, but must wait till he has finished the medicine. Just as the medicine cures slowly and imperceptibly, so does prayer gradually obtain what we ask.

438. What may we ask of God?

We may ask of God everything that is necessary or useful for body and soul.

We may ask of God unconditionally for all that is necessary for our salvation, and for all that is necessary to support our life ("Give us this day our daily *bread*"). But we should ask only conditionally for temporal things that are not necessary for our support; that is, we should ask God to grant them to us under the condition that they will not do harm to our soul. It happens not unfrequently that health, riches and other temporal goods would endanger our salvation, and would thus prove not benefits, but misfortunes.

439. What should we especially ask of God?

We should especially ask of God that we may gain Heaven.

Grace of perseverance. A happy death.

To gain heaven, for which we have been created and redeemed, we must persevere and die a holy,

or happy, death. Although God is the best of fathers, and knows full well all that we need, He will not give it to us without our asking; just as parents wish to be asked by their children for what they need. He already gives us so many things without our asking them, but some other things He wishes us to ask for, that we may acknowledge our own helplessness and our dependence on Him, that we may discharge our duties toward Him, and also that we may show our willingness to do our part for our salvation. God will not save us without our co-operation: we must be willing to do all that we can to gain heaven, and He will grant to our prayers what we ourselves cannot do.

110. Why do we not always obtain what we ask for?

We do not always obtain what we ask for

1) because we do not always pray as we ought,

2) because what we ask for is not always good for us.

1. Many pray without attention or devotion; others pray without confidence; and others without perseverance. The fault is not God's, but that of those who do not pray well.

2. When little children or the sick ask for things that may injure them, v. g., some sharp instrument, some heavy food, parents and physicians do well to refuse it to them; it is, in fact, their duty to do so. In like manner, God, in His goodness, refuses to grant us things that may injure us, that may endanger our salvation, v. g., health or wealth to such as would abuse it to the injury of their soul. There was once a workman who was so pious and so charitable, that the priest prayed to God to make him rich, that he might be able to do

more good. The workman became rich, but, at the same time, stopped practising his religion and no longer helped the poor. The priest went to admonish him, but the rich workman insulted him and rudely put him out of his house. The priest then prayed God to make that man poor again. After some time he lost his riches. He then did penance and began to lead a pious life and in the end died a good death.—When God does not grant us what we ask, let us say: "God's will be done; He knows what is best for me." God will give us something better and more necessary instead.

441. For whom should we pray?

We should pray for ourselves and for others, especially for our parents and relatives, for friends and enemies, and for the souls in purgatory.

We should pray not only for ourselves, but also for our parents and relatives, for our friends, for our enemies, as Jesus Christ strictly commands us ("Pray for those who persecute and calumniate you"), for the Pope, for our bishop and our pastors, for our benefactors (teachers, etc.), for the conversion of sinners, of the heathen and unbelievers, for the sick and the dying, and for the souls in purgatory; in fact, for all mankind.

442. Where can we pray?

We can pray everywhere, because God is everywhere.

We can pray, not only at home and in the church, but also in the street, on land and on sea, etc.

443. Where especially can we pray well?

We can especially pray well in the church.

The church is the house of prayer — a house of God, — consecrated. In the church everything is holy. Jesus present in the Blessed Sacrament.

The church is the house of God; it is exclusively dedicated to His service; in it Jesus Christ really dwells in the Blessed Sacrament; it is, as Jesus says, the house of prayer. Therefore, there is no place better suited for prayer than the church. Just as a rich man sometimes tells a poor man begging assistance in the street, to come to his house for more help, so God wishes to give us more when we go to His house to ask Him for His graces.

444. When can we pray?

We can pray at all times, by day and by night.

Our Lord says: "It behooveth always (at all times) to pray." St. Paul tells us "to pray without intermission." To pray we need not kneel down, or interrupt our work, our study, or even our play. All we need is, for a moment, to raise our heart to God and say, for instance: "My God, I love Thee;" or "my God, help me;" or "all, my God, for Thee;" or "my Jesus, mercy," etc. Blessed Clement Hofbauer, a Redemptorist, used to say that we should devote to prayer all the time we can spare from our other duties. When he was a little boy, he heard some persons say that they were trying to kill time. He asked what that meant. When told its meaning, he replied: "If people have nothing to do, why don't they pray?"

445. When in particular should we pray?

We should pray in particular

1) every morning and evening,
2) before and after meals,
3) on Sundays and Holydays of obligation,
4) in every necessity and temptation.

Daily prayers consist of thanksgiving and petition.

Family prayers are particularly efficacious. The words of our Lord: *"Where there are two or three gathered*

together in My name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18, 20).

1. The morning prayer.—Nature revives, as it were, in the early morning—plants, flowers, birds—thus glorifying the Creator. We should likewise praise and glorify God every morning, first, thanking Him for having preserved us during the night from sickness and death, etc., and for giving us another day to serve Him and save our soul. Then we should beg Him to preserve us from evil during the day, from all danger to soul and body, and to bless us and all we do. Moreover, we should make a good intention, that is, offer to God for His glory and our salvation, all our thoughts, words, affections and deeds during the day, and resolve to avoid sin and sinful company. When we are traveling, we must take the right train, otherwise we shall not reach our destination. In like manner, as we are traveling towards heaven, we can reach it only by starting right every morning. If we start wrong, and do not say any morning prayer, we take the train that leads us—not to God—but to the devil! Good children daily salute their parents and wish them good morning. Now God is the best of fathers, our greatest Benefactor; hence we should salute Him every morning by saying our morning prayer devoutly. Let us also recommend ourselves to the Blessed Virgin by reciting three Hail Marys in honor of her purity, and to our guardian angel and our holy patron by an Our Father and a Hail Mary.

Night prayers.—As we should begin, so also we should end the day with prayer. Let us first thank God for all the graces and blessings He bestowed on us during the day; then we ought to examine our conscience to find out the principal faults we committed during the day—at home, towards our par-

ents, etc., in school or at work, in church, at play; then make an act of contrition for our faults with the resolution to do better. If we find that we have committed some grievous sin, we should resolve to go to confession, as soon as possible, and try to make an act of perfect contrition, begging God not to let us die in that state. Let us then ask God to preserve us during the night, and recommend ourselves to the Blessed Virgin by saying three Hail Marys as in the morning, and an Our Father and a Hail Mary in honor of our guardian angel and holy patron. Only the most careless Catholics omit night prayers.

2. Prayers before and after meals. Before our meals we should beseech God to bless the food we are about to take, so that it may profit both our soul and body. Even the poorest should do so, after the example of Blessed Herman Joseph, who was so poor as to have often only a dry crust of bread for his breakfast. He used to say to the Child Jesus: "O my dearest Jesus, although I have here only a small piece of dry bread, Thou canst so bless it, that it may nourish me better than the most precious food." Many a millionaire with an abundance of the finest things in the market, suffers so much from dyspepsia, as to have no appetite and to be unable to eat anything without making himself sick. Such persons envy the poor hardworking people who have such a good appetite and can relish even the plainest fare. After each meal do not fail to thank God, who has been so good as to feed you. Do not act like the courtiers of King Alphonsus of Spain. They never thanked God after meals. To teach them a lesson, the King got a beggar all in rags and full of dirt to come and sit down at dinner at the King's table. The beggar, obeying the orders the King had given

him, came in, and without saluting the King or any one else, sat down at table among the courtiers, and helped himself plentifully to the delicious viands. Then when he had eaten all he could, he left in a hurry without either thanking or noticing the King. The courtiers were indignant and called him all kinds of hard names. But the King said to them: "That beggar has only imitated your example. You daily sit down to fine meals provided for you by God, and after eating all you want, you never thank Him, or even notice Him." This lesson put them to shame, and they did not fail to profit by it.

3. On Sundays and Holydays we ought to devote more time to prayer, and try to assist not only at Mass, but also at the other services in Church.

4. We should pray in all our wants of both body and soul, in all dangers, and especially in temptations, when our soul is in danger of falling into sin and being lost. Let us often say at such times: "Lord, make haste to help me." "Jesus, Mary, help me; Jesus, Mary, assist me; Jesus, Mary, protect me."

Family Prayers.—In all well-ordered families, the members gather together to recite the morning prayers, or, at least, the night prayers. Such families will surely receive the special blessing and protection of God. (See Matt. 18, 20, above.)

Application. Love and practise prayer. It is a great honor that we are permitted to speak to God. It is so easy to pray: we can do so at all times and in all places. A child loves to speak to its father, a child of God loves to speak to God. By prayer we honor God and may obtain everything. He that knows how to pray well, knows also how to live well (St. Augustine); and he that lives well, shall also die well.

The Lord's Prayer.

446. Why is the Our Father the best of all prayers?

The Our Father is the best of all prayers, because Christ Himself has taught it.

The Lord's Prayer. Is most powerful. Is simple and easy for young and old. Suits all. Contains everything for which we ought to pray. It is a summary of the whole gospel.

Pious and holy people know well how to pray. But no one knows how to pray better than our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God. After He had insisted on the necessity of praying always, the apostles asked Him: "Lord, teach us how to pray." He granted their request and taught them the Our Father. It is, then, the most beautiful, the most holy, the most powerful, the very best of prayers. It is so easy, that even little children can learn it and its meaning. It is the most comprehensive of prayers, for there is nothing we can say to God or ask of Him, that is not already included in the Our Father. It is also so full of instruction, that we may call it, in some manner, a compendium, or summary, of the Gospel, of our Lord's teachings.

447. Of what parts does the Lord's Prayer consist?

The Lord's Prayer consists of a short preface and seven petitions.

The Preface.

Our Father who art in Heaven.

448. Of what should the word "Father" remind us?

The word "Father" should remind us to pray with filial confidence, because God is our Father.

Filial = childlike.

When we wish to speak to some one we begin by addressing him by his name or title, in order to call his attention. For instance, when we wish to ask our father for something, we begin by saying: "Father." In like manner, when we pray to God, we address Him by some title. Hence, in the Lord's prayers, we address Him as "our Father who art in heaven." How honorable for us to be able to call God Himself our Father, and ourselves, consequently, His children! What a noble favor Jesus has bestowed on us by giving us the privilege, nay, the right to be the children of God Himself! Hence we should have the unwavering confidence of a good child in the best of fathers, when we pray to God.

449. Of what should the word "our" remind us.

The word "our" should remind us to pray for one another, because we are all children of the one Father who is in Heaven.

We, that is, all men, are children of God. All men may call Him Father; hence all men are brethren, members of one and the same family, and should love and pray for one another as such, and should all love and obey God as their Father.

450. Of what should the words "who art in Heaven" remind us?

The words "who art in Heaven" should remind us to raise our hearts to God, and to banish all worldly thoughts during prayer.

Although God is everywhere, He is especially in heaven, where He manifests His glory; and as we are His children, we should often raise our hearts to heaven and strive by all means to be one day in heaven sharing our Father's happiness and glory;

for children should be with their father and enjoy his goods.

The Seven Petitions.

First Petition:
Hallowed be Thy name.

451. What do we pray for in the first petition?

In the first petition we pray for the grace to honor and glorify God at all times.

Hallowed = honored as sacred.

This petition means that we pray that not only God's name, but God Himself be duly honored by ourselves and by all mankind.

Second Petition:
Thy kingdom come.

452. What do we pray for in the second petition?

In the second petition we pray that God may bring all men into His Church and after death take them into Heaven.

God's Kingdom on earth is the Catholic Church; His Kingdom in the next world is heaven. Hence we pray that God may bring all men into the Catholic Church during life, so that they may also be received after death into heaven.

Third Petition:
Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.

453. What do we pray for in the third petition?

In the third petition we pray that we may at all times do the will of God as faithfully as the angels do it in Heaven.

In heaven the angels do God's holy will punctually, promptly and cheerfully. To merit heaven we

must do God's will on earth, i. e., keep His commandments, in the same way.

Fourth Petition:
Give us this day our daily bread.

454. What do we pray for in the fourth petition?

In the fourth petition we pray that God may give us all that is necessary for body and soul.

By asking for our daily bread, we mean to pray God to give us all that is necessary to support our corporal life, v. g., food, clothing, shelter, as well as the life of our soul, that is, all the graces necessary to avoid sin and faithfully to discharge our duties. We ask this "for this day," because God wishes to show us that we constantly depend on Him, and that we must pray every day for the wants of that day. The morrow is not ours, and we may not live to see it.

Fifth Petition:
And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

455. What do we pray for in the fifth petition?

In the fifth petition we pray that God may forgive us our sins and the punishment due to them.

Trespasses here means sins, for sin is a trespass or transgression of the law of God. To enter heaven we must be entirely free from sin; hence we beseech God to forgive us our sins, to free us from them. But He will do so under one condition —that we forgive all who sin against us. If we forgive them, He will forgive us; if we refuse to forgive them, He will not forgive us. Hence He wishes us to be mindful of this condition, when He requires us to pray that He may forgive us *as* we forgive our neighbor.

456. What do we promise God in the fifth petition?

In the fifth petition we promise God that we will forgive all those who have offended us.

Therefore, if we refuse to forgive others, we here ask God not to forgive us either.

Sixth Petition:
And lead us not into temptation.

457. What do we pray for in the sixth petition?

In the sixth petition we pray that God may preserve us from temptations to sin, or, at least, give us the grace to resist them.

God does not tempt us, but He allows us to be tempted, that we may practise the virtues against which we are tempted, and gain merit for heaven. Hence we ask God to keep from us dangerous temptations, or, at least, to help us to overcome them.

Seventh Petition:
But deliver us from evil.

458. What do we pray for in the seventh petition?

In the seventh petition we pray that God may preserve us from sin and from all the evils which came into the world through sin.

Sin is the only real evil: hence we pray God to keep us altogether from sin. As to the physical evils—sickness, poverty, sorrow, etc.—we here pray that God may free us, if such be His will, or if it would not endanger our salvation.

459. What does the word "Amen" mean?

The word "Amen," means: "So be it."

Amen is a Hebrew word. When we say it at the end of a prayer, etc., it is like repeating and confirming the prayer, etc., with a single word.

Application. Say the Our Father frequently, and with devotion. Remember, it came from the most sacred Heart of Jesus and touches the Heart of our heavenly Father. It always finds a ready hearing. If you are in trouble or in need and know not how to speak to God: say the Our Father, it includes everything.

The Our Father is a short prayer, but full of meaning, as you have learned. Say it often not only for yourselves, but for all those you wish to pray for. If you cannot otherwise show your gratitude, say the Our Father for those who do you favors.

The Hail Mary.

Hail Mary, full of grace! the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou among women (words of the Archangel Gabriel; Luke 1, 28), and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, (words of St. Elizabeth; Luke 1, 42), Jesus. (Added by the Church.)

Holy Mary, Mother of God! pray for us sinners, now, and at the hour of our death. Amen. (Prayer of the Church.)

The Hail Mary is composed of the words addressed by the angel Gabriel to the Blessed Virgin —Hail full of grace, the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou among women—and by St. Elizabeth to Mary—and blessed is the fruit of thy womb—and of the words added by the Church—Jesus, Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

460. Of how many parts does the Hail Mary consist?

The Hail Mary consists of two parts: a prayer of praise and a prayer of petition.

Ave Maria. Angelical Salutation.

The Prayer of Praise.

461. Of what should we think when saying the words "Hail Mary"?

When saying the words "Hail Mary" we should think that we salute and honor the Blessed Virgin Mary in the same words in which the angel, in the name of God, saluted and honored her.

The angel Gabriel who thus saluted and honored Mary, spoke not in his own name, but in the name and by the order of God Himself These words are, then, a divine salutation. St. Bernard used often to salute Mary, saying "Hail Mary" when passing before her pictures or statues. One day as he had done this, he heard Mary saying to him from the statue: "Hail Bernard."

462. What do we mean when we say "full of grace"?

When we say "full of grace" we mean that God gave the Blessed Virgin all the holiness that He can give to a human being.

Mary possessed on earth more grace, and therefore enjoys in heaven greater glory and happiness than all the angels and saints together. She was holy already before her birth, having been conceived immaculate—free from original sin—and endowed with wonderful graces.

463. What do we mean: when we say "the Lord is with thee"?

When we say "the Lord is with thee" we mean that God always was with the Blessed Virgin in a most particular manner.

God was always with her as in a perpetual communion.

464. What do we mean when we say "blessed art thou among women"?

When we say "blessed art thou among women" we mean that the Virgin Mary is blessed and honored above all women.

No other woman was so honored as Mary—the daughter of the heavenly Father, the Mother of God the Son, and the Spouse of God the Holy Ghost.

465. What do we mean when we say "blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus"?

When we say "blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus," we mean that the Virgin Mary is blessed for having given birth to the Redeemer from Whom all blessings come.

It is because Mary is the Mother of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, that she is so blessed, that she received so many graces and privileges from God.

The Prayer of Petition.

466. What do we ask of the Blessed Virgin Mary?

We ask of the Blessed Virgin Mary that she may pray to God for us.

467. Why can the Blessed Virgin Mary obtain for us all things from God?

The Blessed Virgin Mary can obtain for us all things from God, because she is the Mother of God.

When we pray to God for something, we ask Him to *give* it to us. When we pray to Mary or to the saints for something, we ask Mary and the saints to *obtain* it for us from God. Mary is all-powerful by her prayers; she can obtain everything she asks

of God, for He cannot refuse His Mother, whom He loves so much, anything she asks of Him.

468. Why do we say: "pray for us sinners"?

We say: "pray for us sinners", because we are sinners and because the Blessed Virgin Mary has especial compassion for sinners.

We are all sinners. It was to redeem sinners that Jesus was born of Mary; she must then especially care and pray for sinners, since for their sake she became the Mother of God. The Church calls her the refuge of sinners, the Mother of mercy.

469. What do we ask of the Blessed Virgin Mary when we say: "now, and at the hour of our death"?

When we say: "now, and at the hour of our death" we ask the Blessed Virgin Mary

1) to obtain for us everything that we need in life;
2) to assist us especially when we die that we may obtain Heaven.

1. Just as in the Our Father we ask God for our daily bread *this day,* so we ask Mary in the Hail Mary to pray for us *now* that we may obtain what we now need. This should induce us to reflect on what we now need, and to say that prayer to her whenever we stand in need of anything.

2. We ask Mary to pray especially for us when we are dying, that we may obtain the inestimable and indispensable grace of final perseverance—a good and holy death.

Anecdote.—A young man had led a very bad life; he fell sick, and was soon in danger of death. The priest came to him, and exhorted him to make

his confession. He scoffed at this, saying he wished to die as he had lived. A friend exhorted him to be converted. He replied: "I am too great a sinner for that." His friend rejoined: "Have recourse to Mary; she is the refuge of sinners." "I say every day a Hail Mary in her honor; can that be of any help to me?" "Of course; do you not ask her to pray for and assist you at the hour of your death?" "That is true; send for a priest, for I wish to make my confession." This was done, and the young man, full of contrition, made his confession, received the last sacraments with good dispositions, begged pardon for his past scandals, and died thus in a holy manner.

Application. Next to the Our Father, the Hail Mary is the sweetest, the most beautiful, and the most powerful prayer. It is the most beautiful salutation that was ever heard on earth: first spoken by the angel. Always say the Hail Mary with devotion: thus you give great pleasure to your heavenly Mother Mary, and will be sure of her intercession.

The oftener we recite the Hail Mary, the greater pleasure we give our dear Mother. Why?

The Angelus.

470. What prayer do we say when the bell rings for the Angelus?

When the bell rings for the Angelus we say: The Angel of the Lord, etc.

471. Why is the Angelus-bell rung three times a day?

The Angelus-bell is rung three times a day in order that we may frequently thank God for the Incarnation and place ourselves under the protection of the Mother of God.

472. Are we obliged to say the Angelus?

We are not obliged to say the Angelus, but it is good and salutary to do so.

Fervent Catholics delight in reciting the Angelus, because they are willing to do for the service of God and their salvation more than is absolutely necessary, and because saying the Angelus is a source of grace and blessing. Hence when you hear the Angelus-bell ring, recite the Angelus; if you are then in the street, say it silently as you walk along.

The Rosary.

It has always been customary in the church, also amongst the laity, to recite frequently the 150 psalms, which form the main portion of the priest's daily office or breviary. Those who could not learn the psalms by heart or could not read said the Our Father or the Hail Mary or other prayers 150 times, instead of the psalms. This form of prayer was called psalter or rosary (garden of roses). It was particularly propagated by the Bl. Alain de la Roche († 1475). In its present form the Rosary dates from the beginning of the sixteenth century. It is divided into three parts—the five joyful mysteries, the five sorrowful mysteries, and the five glorious mysteries. For each mystery one Our Father and ten Hail Marys, followed by the Glory be to the Father, are recited. Before beginning the rosary—or any of its three parts separately, we should make the sign of the cross, then recite the Apostles' Creed, one Our Father and three Hail Marys for the gifts of faith, hope and charity, and conclude by the Glory be to the Father.

The principal part in the rosary is the Hail Mary. Each Hail Mary is like a beautiful rose woven in Mary's crown. The roses of the joyful mysteries are, as it were, white, those of the sorrowful mysteries are red, and those of the glorious mysteries are golden.

173. Why is the rosary so excellent a prayer?

The rosary is so excellent a prayer

1) because it is composed of the most beautiful prayers;

2) because by it we obtain many graces and gain many indulgences.

October, rosary month. — Confraternity of the rosary. — Living rosary.

It is a most excellent devotion, being composed of the Our Father, the Hail Mary, the Creed, the Glory be to the Father, and reminding us of the principal mysteries of our holy religion.

The Rosary is like a prayer-book full of excellent devotions, and may be used at all times, and everywhere. It includes nearly all other devotions; v. g., to the Blessed Trinity, sign of cross, Creed, Glory be, etc.—to the holy names of Jesus and Mary; to Christ's infancy, passion, five wounds, precious blood; to Mary's joys, sorrows, glory; to St. Joseph, the witness of Christ's infancy and youth; for obtaining a holy death, etc.

2. The rosary obtains for us all kinds of graces —v. g., that of conversion; a man told a priest: "I cannot believe any more; I have lost my faith." The priest told him to say the rosary. He did so, and soon regained his faith. But we should say the rosary with attention, with confidence and with perseverance, as we should say all our other prayers.—Many indulgences are attached to the

saying of the rosary. We should make the intention of gaining them before we begin it.—Try to assist at the public devotion of the rosary during October. Join, if you can, the confraternity of the rosary, or the Living Rosary—a pious society of 15 persons, each one reciting daily a mystery of the rosary, so that the whole rosary (15 decades) is said daily by them.

474. When do we derive particular benefit from the rosary?

We derive particular benefit from the rosary when we ask for a particular grace at every mystery.

To say the rosary properly, we must: 1) pronounce the words devoutly, 2) mediate briefly on each mystery. These are also the conditions for gaining the indulgences.

(It is well to question — or cross-examine — the children on the grace attached to each mystery — see Catechism, pages 98 and 99 — on the days or feasts on which the different mysteries are celebrated. And tell them briefly how we can meditate on the mysteries by thinking on each of them during the recitation of their particular decades.)

The rosary is a splendid prayer-book, because of its title; it is conveniently carried, contains the most beautiful prayers; it is cheap, durable, does not strain the eyes; it is always heard by God, and obtains for us great graces and a holy death.

The Stations of the Cross.

475. Which are the fourteen stations of the Cross?

The fourteen stations of the Cross are:

1) Jesus is condemned to death.
2) Jesus is made to bear His Cross.
3) Jesus falls the first time under His Cross.
4) Jesus meets His afflicted Mother.

5) The Cyrenian helps Jesus to carry His Cross.
6) Veronica wipes the face of Jesus.
7) Jesus falls the second time.
8) Jesus speaks to the women of Jerusalem.
9) Jesus falls the third time.
10) Jesus is stripped of His garments.
11) Jesus is nailed to the Cross.
12) Jesus dies on the Cross.
13) Jesus is taken down from the Cross.
14) Jesus is placed in the sepulchre.

The Way of the Cross, or stations, is the way through which Jesus Christ passed in Jerusalem from the judgment-hall of Pilate to Calvary and the holy sepulchre. The Blessed Virgin and the early Christians were wont to go along that way in prayer and meditation on Christ's sufferings and death for our sins. But because only few persons can go to Jerusalem to do the same, the Church has allowed the stations to be erected, and imparts to those who devoutly perform this devotion, the same indulgences as are granted to those who make the Way of the Cross in Jerusalem.

476. What must we do when saying the stations privately?

When saying the stations privately, we must go from one station to another and meditate at each station on the sufferings of our Lord.

Thus only can the indulgences be gained. It is different when the stations are said in common.

When prevented from going to a place where the Stations are erected, we may gain the indulgences of the Stations by holding in our hand a

crucifix to which are attached the indulgences of the stations, and reciting for each of the 14 stations the Our Father, the Hail Mary and the Glory be to the Father; and then saying each of these prayers five times in honor of our Saviour's five wounds, and once for the intentions of the Pope.—When we make the Way of the Cross privately where the stations are erected, no particular prayers are required.

When the Way of the Cross is made in common and we cannot go from station to station, but must remain in the same place, it suffices, if we turn towards each station. Let us say the stations often, for it will teach us to love Jesus and avoid sin, and will enable us to gain numerous indulgences for ourselves or for the suffering souls.

Litanies.

477. What are litanies?

Litanies are prayers composed of many short invocations of God and of the saints.

Litany comes from a Greek word meaning suppliant prayer for help in need. Because the litanies were first used in processions, and were recited alternately by priests and people, they were first called alternate prayers. They always begin with—"Lord, have mercy on us"—and end with the triple invocation—"Lamb of God," etc.

478. Which are the most excellent litanies?

The most excellent litanies are:

1) the litany of the Most Holy Name of Jesus,
2) the litany of the Sacred Heart of Jesus,
3) the litany of the Blessed Virgin,
4) the litany of the Saints.

These four Litanies have been approved of by the Holy Father.

Only those litanies approved by the Pope may be used at public divine service. Other litanies may be used privately, provided they are approved by the Bishop. The most ancient litany is that of the Saints. It is used principally at the 40 Hours, at processions, and at ordinations. The litany of the Blessed Virgin, or of Our Lady of Loretto, was first used in its present form at the famous shrine of Loretto, in northern Italy. Pope Pius IX. approved the litany of the Holy Name of Jesus in 1862, and Pope Leo XIII. that of the Sacred Heart in 1899. We ought often to recite at least the Litany of the Blessed Virgin.

The Sign of the Cross.

In the name of the † Father and of the † Son and of the † Holy Ghost. Amen.

479. Why do we honor God in a particular manner by making the sign of the cross?

We honor God in a particular manner by making the sign of the cross, because we thereby profess our faith in the Blessed Trinity and in the Redemption.

We profess our faith in the Blessed Trinity by the words, our faith in the Redemption by the sign which we make while pronouncing the words.

The sign of the cross is usually the first religious act taught to little children. It is a short profession of faith, and is the sign specially distinguishing Catholics from Protestants. It is made with the right hand having the fingers outstretched, but joined. The right hand is placed first on the forehead, then it is brought down to the breast, in a

straight line, to designate the upright part of the cross; then on the left shoulder to the right, in a straight line to designate the cross-piece of the cross. When we place the right hand to our forehead we say: "In the name"—one name and one God—"of the Father"—the first Person of the Blessed Trinity. When we bring the hand down to the breast, we say: "and of the Son"—meaning that the Son comes from the Father, and was sent by Him on earth to redeem us. Then placing the hand on the left shoulder, we say: "and of the Holy"; then placing it on the right, we conclude saying: "Ghost. Amen." This indicates that the Holy Ghost proceeds equally from the Father and the Son. This is the usual, or greater, sign of the Cross. The small sign of the cross is made at the Gospel during Mass. With the thumb of the right hand we form a small cross 1) on our forehead, to indicate that we believe; then 2) on our lips, to indicate that we will profess our faith by our words; then 3) on our breast, meaning that we will practise it by our deeds. We may also on other occasions make the sign of the cross on our forehead only, or only on our lips, or merely on our heart. When parents bless their children, they do so by making the sign of the cross on their forehead. Priests alone make the sign of the cross over others to bless them.

480. Why is the sign of the cross so very beneficial and efficacious?

The sign of the cross is so very beneficial and efficacious

1) because it drives away the devil, who fears the cross,
2) because by it we obtain many graces and blessings from God.

Hence to *"bless oneself"* means to make the sign of the cross.

1. The Church uses the sign of the cross to drive out the devil from possessed persons, and we should use it also as a protection against the evil one, as the devil is called. He fears that sign, because it was by the cross that Christ overcame the devil.

2. It is with the sign of the cross that divine blessings are imparted, for through the cross Christ has merited for us all blessings.

481. When should we particularly make the sign of the cross?

We should particularly make the sign of the cross

1) in the morning on awakening and in the evening when retiring,
2) before and after prayer,
3) when tempted, especially by bad thoughts,
4) in all dangers,
5) before undertaking anything important.

1. In the morning we should not wait till after we have arisen to make the sign of the cross, but should do so as soon as we awake. It then means, as if we said: "Begone, Satan; I belong to God; I am a Christian; I will not sin today, but will do all to please God." This will bring God's blessing on us for the whole day.—Having thus begun the day, we should end it in like manner, so as to draw upon ourselves God's blessing during the night also.

2. To make the sign of the cross before we begin to pray is of great help to render our prayer fervent and powerful. Let us also finish our prayers with the sign of the cross.

3. St. Anthony used to say to his monks:

"There is no more powerful means to overcome temptations and gains the victory, than the sign of the cross." This is especially true with regard to temptations to anger and impurity.

4. Many a one has been freed from danger, and saved from imminent death by making the sign of the cross, v. g., on railroads, on the ocean, in thunder-storms. (St. John and St. Benedict made it over poisoned wine that had been given them to drink and were saved from death.)

5. If we make the sign of the cross before we undertake anything important, or to obtain help in difficulties (v. g., a hard lesson), we shall surely receive light and strength to succeed therein.

Blessings and Consecrations.

482. When in particular is the sign of the cross efficacious?

The sign of the cross is particularly efficacious when a bishop or priest, in the name of the Church, makes it over persons or things; because thereby they are blessed and made holy.

The priest (and the bishop still more) received at his ordination the power to bless, for then the bishop anointing and consecrating his hands, said: "Whatever these hands bless, shall be blessed." Blessing is less than consecrating.

483. What prayer does the priest say when blessing persons or things?

When blessing persons or things, the priest, in the name of the Church, implores the blessing of God upon them.

The blessing at Mass; Benediction with the Blessed Sacrament; blessing of children; blessing of the sick. The blessing of St. Blase.

Always consider it a great benefit to receive a bishop's or a priest's blessing.

The priest, blessing in the name of the Church, represents our Lord, and his blessing is ratified by Jesus Himself. The priest gives his blessing at Mass to all present—except when the Mass is said in black vestments. The most holy and powerful blessing is the benediction of the Blessed Sacrament; for then Jesus Christ Himself in the hands of the priest, imparts the blessing. There is a special blessing for little children and also for the sick. The blessing of St. Blase is given on February 3d with two lighted candles crossed, against diseases of the throat. Houses, food, etc., are blessed. When we go to a bishop (or he comes to us), we should kneel on one knee, ask his blessing and kiss his ring. The Pope gives, on certain feasts and other occasions, his solemn blessing to the city of Rome and to the whole world (urbi et orbi).

484. What takes place when the priest blesses persons or things?

When the priest blesses persons or things they become holy and consecrated to the service of God.

Churches, altars, bells, chalices, — water, candles, ashes, palms, Easter-candle, — crucifixes, rosaries, medals, pictures, etc.

Sacramentals.

The priest, by the power he received at his ordination, may bless persons and whatever they use. When he blesses things to be used in the service of God, such as rosaries, crucifixes, scapulars, pious pictures, holy water, palms on Palm Sunday, medals, the blessing is permanent, and it is not lawful to put such things to a profane use. When such

things are no longer fit for use, they should be burnt. There are certain things which receive a higher blessing, called consecration, which is reserved to bishops—such as the consecration of churches, altars, chalices, cemeteries, church-bells. The dedication—or simpler blessing, of a new church may be performed by a priest specially empowered for this purpose. Some things may be blessed at any time, such as holy water, crosses, medals; certain other things are to be blessed on specified days and with special ceremonies, such as candles on Candlemas-day (February 2d), palms on Palm-Sunday, the Paschal Candle on Holy Saturday, baptismal water on Holy Saturday and the eve of Pentecost. The blessing of *Agnus Deis* —small round pieces of wax from paschal candles impressed with the figure of the Lamb of God—is performed by the Pope only.—Religious, when they make the religious vows, or profession, are consecrated to God.

Objects blessed, to which indulgences are attached, may not be sold or, if already in use, may not be exchanged or lent, without losing the indulgences.

Objects to which a permanent blessing is attached, are called Sacramentals, because they are somewhat similar to the sacraments, in so far as they bring spiritual profit to those who use them properly. The Sacramentals are instituted by the Church, and have their power from the Church. Hence they differ from the sacraments, and do not produce infallible effects or impart or increase sanctifying grace. The devout use of the Sacramentals suggests pious thoughts and adds to our prayers, through those of the Church, greater power and efficacy.

485. Why is it very beneficial to use blessed articles?

It is very beneficial to use blessed articles

1) because they protect us against the devil and many evils,

2) because they give us blessings for body and soul.

Some blessed objects are for the church and the priest only, such as, church-bells, altars, chalices, ciboriums, priestly vestments. Others are publicly blessed and distributed to the people, v. g., holy water, candles and palms. Others are for the use of the people, such as rosaries, medals, scapulars, etc. To wear or have at home such blessed objects is very beneficial.

1. Because, after the sin of our first parents, the earth was cursed together with all it contains. When a thing is blessed, the curse is removed, and the devil no longer has any power over it. Hence such a blessed object is a kind of protection against the devil, especially since it bears on it, as it were, the sign of the cross made over it when it was blessed.

2. Experience proves that such blessed objects bring blessings to those who wear them, or to the houses in which they are placed. Blessed palm is a protection against thunderstorms. Many have been saved from death in time of danger by wearing the scapular, a blessed medal, etc. Besides all this, these objects bring us many other graces, implored by the priest when he blessed them.

486. Which, of all blessed objects should we most frequently use?

Of all blessed objects, we should most frequently use holy water.

It should always be in Catholic homes.

The blessing of holy water is usually performed on Sundays before high Mass, with many prayers and exorcisms, and then sprinkled before the Mass over the people by the priest. This indicates the purity of heart with which people should assist at Mass. Holy water is to be found in a vessel, placed for this purpose, at the entrance of churches, so that people may bless themselves with it both on entering and on leaving the church. As water is used to wash and to cleanse, let us say when using holy water: "Lord, cleanse my heart from sin." The priest usually sprinkles with holy water the objects he blesses. Catholics should always have holy water at home, bless themselves with it morning and evening, and sprinkle the rooms with it in time of storms, etc. The sick especially should often use holy water. The priest also uses holy water when he comes to a house to bless the sick, or to administer any sacrament to them. Finally, holy water is sprinkled over the corpse at burial.

Application. Always have something blessed about you: a rosary, medal, scapular and the like. Have always in your homes blessed candles, palms and holy water. Use holy water frequently, especially when rising, leaving the house and retiring. It has a great power. Sprinkle holy water for the benefit of the poor souls, and whilst doing so say: 'Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord.'

Let us use holy water especially in time of violent temptations. An indulgence of 50 days is granted to those who devoutly make the sign of the cross; but if we make it with holy water, we can gain an indulgence of 100 days.

THE END.

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